Old Corn Gems

NUMBER THIRTY-SEVEN

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The Ultimate End of the Commandment is Love Out of a Pure Heart and a Good Conscience

MANY there are who have very erroneous views of what is signified by the expression, "pure in heart;" one class considers this impossible of attainment in the present life; another class, no less mistakenly, considers this to mean absolute perfection in every thought, word and deed; and in believing that they fulfil these conditions, and in teaching others similarly, they are making a grave mistake.

Answering the last error first, we remark that it is possible for one to deceive himself respecting his own heart and his own condition, as for instance, apparently, the Pharisees of our Lord's day: claiming that they were perfect, and that they kept the whole law, they were merely deceiving themselves, but not the Lord; by their self-deception, a form of hypocrisy, which blinding them to their own need of the robe of Christ's righteousness, left them in the filthy rags of their own righteousness, unfit for the Kingdom. And so with some today, who claim perfection of thought, word and deed. They have blinded themselves to their own weaknesses, imperfections and errors, and are in a far worse condition than he who, though outwardly less moral, is at heart better in the Lord's sight, because honest in confessing his unworthiness, because for such the Lord has provided forgiveness of sins,—covering with the robe of Christ's righteousness.

Nevertheless, those who think that purity of heart is an impossibility in the present life are likewise mistaken. Their mistake arises from not seeing a wide distinction between a purity of heart and a perfection or righteousness of all the words and deeds of life. The heart, as used in this text, refers to the mind, the will, the actuating intentions or motives of the man. With this thought before the mind, it is easy to see that one might be pure of heart, that is of pure intentions, and yet confess himself unable to do and to be all that his good intentions desire and endeavor. He whose heart is pure toward the Lord in Christ is the same one whose eye is single, the same one who is not double-minded but single-minded, whose mind, will, heart, **seeks first, last and always the will of God.**—Z. '00: 359.

CONVENTIONS

Chicago, Ill., July 16th, 17th and 18th. Brother E. J. Morgan, 620 Cottage Row, Sycamore, Ill., Secretary of Convention.

Richfield, Wis., July 30th, 31st and August 1st. Meals and rooms will be provided for the visiting friends by the local Ecclesia. Brother Oscar Kuenzike, Colgate, Wis., Secretary of Convention.

Minneapolis, Minn., August 13th, 14th and 15th. Brother C. A. Hallberg, 4153 21st Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn., Secretary of Convention.

All Standfast Bible Students are heartily invited to attend these conventions. Brothers Palmer and Bartlett will be the speakers, possibly assisted by some of the local Elders.

The Lord leaves the Spiritual Israelite **free**: he does not shower temporal blessings upon those who live up to their covenant, more than upon others, nor does he pour out curses, blights and troubles upon those who violate their covenant more than upon others. He leaves all the "house of sons" thus **free**, in order that each by his own conduct may manifest the **sincerity** or the **insincerity** of the covenant which he made. Thus all of the sons of God practically pass judgement upon themselves. —Z. '99: 153.

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The Spiritual Israelite offers unto the Lord the fruit of his lips in prayer and praise, but if these are offered in a merely perfunctory manner as a "duty" andnot from the heart, they are blind, sick and lame offerings, which the Lord despises. He offers unto the Lord service or money, but if these be given grudgingly, not heartily and with a loving appreciation which wishes they might be increased a thousandfold, then the offering is blind and lame and sick, and not pleasing in the Lord's sight.
—Z. '99: 266.

The Christian who has learned in everything to give thanks, and to make acknowledgment to the heavenly Father, has learned to appreciate and to enjoy his blessing more than others. To such thankful hearts the plainest of food will be more appreciated, more happifying, more satisfying than to others.—Z. '00: 172.

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Clean spiritual provender is important to the Lord's flock, those who have come to a knowledge of the truth should abstain from all food that is defiled. If this shall seem to restrict the bill of spiritual fare, and the opportunities for mingling with the Babylonians at their table, it will have its compensating advantages nevertheless, for the Lord will bless to the spiritual good of his faithful ones even the plainest of spiritual blessings and opportunities. Let a test be made, after the manner of Daniel and his companions, and see whether or not those who feed upon the clean provender of the Lord's Word, and who reject the more sumptuous arrangement and defiled food of Babylon will not be fairer of countenance spiritually, even after a short test. But let us not suppose that anything would be gained by simply abstaining from the Babylonian portion and starving themselves spiritually. Whoever abstains from the popular and defiled supply must seek and use the simple and undefiled food which the Lord in his providence supplies, otherwise their last state of spiritual starvation will be worse than the first.—Z. '99: 167.

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OLD CORN GEMS

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"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"Where a brother gives an interpretation of a Scripture which differs from that given by Brother Russell, and Brother Russell's interpretation seems reasonable and in harmony with the plan of God, then we believe it a safe rule to follow Brother Russell's interpretation, for the reason that he is the servant of the Church, so constituted by the Lord for the Laodicean period; and therefore we should expect the Lord to teach us through Him. Where there arises a doubt in the mind as to which interpretation is correct, then it is always safer to resolve that doubt in favor of Brother Russell's interpretation. We believe such to be in harmony with the Lord's will. Z. '18:51.

DOUBLE-MINDED

"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."—Jas. 1:8.

BY NATURE all mankind have the depraved mind or will, whose chief characteristic is selfishness. And it is the desire to gratify this depraved will, including all selfish desires, that leads into sin in its every form. But those who have tasted of divine grace, and have come unto the Father through the Son and the merits of his sacrifice, and whose eyes have been opened to discern the difference between righteousness and unrighteousness, and the natural result of both under the operation of the divine law, and who have consecrated themselves to the Lord, are said to have a new mind, a new will,—sometimes called a clean heart and a right spirit. The natural, fallen disposition or will or mind is Scripturally termed "the mind of the flesh," while the renewed mind, disposition or will is termed "the mind of the spirit," because it is the result of the influence or spirit of the truth.

Nevertheless, this new mind or will, based upon more proper views of right and wrong, is evolved through the very same brain as the other; and these brains by which we do our thinking and reasoning and willing are very closely and sympathetically allied to our depraved physical conditions, so that it is more natural, more easy, for us under present conditions to exercise the will or mind of the flesh than to exercise the will or mind of the spirit. Nor can this connection between our depraved physical conditions and our wills be completely broken up: so long as we are in the flesh it will be impossible for us to completely deaden its influence upon our minds and wills: consequently the will of the flesh and the works of the flesh would be the most easy and the most natural to us—the thoughts, words and deeds of the fallen disposition coming without seeking and without effort.

On the contrary, as the new mind or will was begotten or implanted in us by an outside influence, foreign to ourselves and our depravity, it, like all invaders, for a long time at least must hold its control, if at all, as would an invading foreigner—**by force**. The force or power by which the spirit of truth, the spirit of righteousness, the spirit of our God, gained a foothold in our hearts, was through the enlightenment of our minds with the quickening or revivifying of certain organs of the mind which had for many generations lain dormant and consequently become dwarfed and weak, and of other organs which for many generations had become distorted and perverted through misuse, under the domination of error, superstition, etc.

The spirit of truth, the spirit of the Lord, entered our minds as a great general might land upon a foreign shore, and recruit his army from amongst those whom he desires to conquer,—by lifting up and encouraging and enlightening the rightly disposed, and drilling these and arming them in his service, for the overthrow of a bad government, and the establishment of a righteous government. Such a new government, seeking the best interests of every citizen, and willing to have the co-operation of each, would nevertheless find it extremely difficult to control the lower elements of society, except by putting all of its affairs fully in charge and under the control of the rightly disposed: and so, too, in our minds, we find that there are certain lower organs or propensities which have maintained their strength and vigor, while some of the higher organs of our nature have lost their vitality and power to rule, and become dwarfed under the control of sin and ignorance. The spirit of truth, the spirit of the Lord, having gained entrance to our minds, has enlightened and quickened and is constantly drilling these better elements of our natural dispositions, and seeks to restore to them the control originally theirs, over the baser or lower propensities of our nature.

Nothing else need be expected than warfare between the new mind seeking under the Lord's direction to regain the control, and the depraved mind which obtained the control under the reign of sin and death. The Apostle mentions this warfare, saying:—"The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5:17.) The inspired Apostle here puts the matter very strongly, and yet experience proves to all Christians that he puts it very truthfully, "Ye **cannot** do the things that ye would."

So far, then, from being discouraged that our new minds cannot conquer an absolute peace, and come into such perfect conditions that a wrong thought could never rise up to assert itself and to tempt us, we should, on the contrary, while prompt to crush the slightest uprising of the mind of the flesh, nevertheless **realize that our condition is the very one which the Lord designs as best for us.** We should realize that our faithfulness to righteousness is attested, not by the fact that we have no trials or besetments from the evil mind of the flesh, but that by the grace of God we have a holy **will,** a holy desire to **promptly resist** and by the Lord's grace to overcome every evil suggestion.

There are a few people in the world, we believe, who claim to have become so dead naturally and so alive spiritually that they have no "motions of sin in the flesh;"—so that no evil thought or desire even so much as suggests itself to them. In our judgment these people are deceiving themselves; not only because their alleged experience is different from the experiences of other Christian people, faithfully battling against every motion of the flesh to the end of life's journey, but more particularly because their alleged experiences are contrary to the Word of Truth which in many places assures us (concerning the new creature with the new mind, seeking to overcome the mind of the flesh, and to bring every thought and word and act into subjection to the will of God in Christ), saying, "Ye **cannot do** [perfectly] the things that ye would."

This implies not only that the Lord's people, the new creatures in Christ, will be **liable** to besetment on the part of the mind of the flesh, but it implies also, that the mind of the flesh (in spite of our best efforts to down it, to mortify it), while not succeeding in accomplishing its evil purposes, will nevertheless hinder us in divers ways from accomplishing all the good and great and noble things to which the new mind will prompt us. He who thinks that he is accomplishing great things, he who succeeds in accomplishing all that he would, all the things that he wills to accomplish, may be sure that **he is not willing on a high enough plane:** just as he who fancies that he has no besetments of the flesh is merely deceiving himself, and is so asleep as respects his new mind that he does not recognize sharply the distinctions between the new mind and the old mind, nor discriminate closely between truth and error, righteousness and sin.

The Double Minded

A double-minded man or woman is one who has received the new mind and recognizes the difference between the mind of the flesh and the mind of the spirit, but who, instead of giving over the control of his life to either one, thinks erroneously that he can succeed better by dividing matters. **The double mind is the compromising disposition.** The old nature, as soon as it recognizes the presence of the new, is inclined to dissimulate, and to propose compromise and peace, fearing its own extermination. The new mind urges right, truth, the spirit, disposition, of God; and that these should have free course, and that every thought daring to assert itself in opposition to these recognized principles of righteousness should be summarily dealt with and put to death as a rebel. The mind of the flesh trembles at such thorough-going law and discipline, and raises various objections:

(1) It would cause an awful rupture and a lifelong war between the new mind and the tendency, mind or will of the fallen flesh. It would mean self-denial; it would mean the risk of breaking of tender ties, and the rupture of long cherished hopes and ambitions.

(2) It objects that such a course would be fanatical; that such is not the course of the world in general, nor even the course of the most respectable among those who are classed as Christians; and that to follow the course proposed would, therefore, mean, as gauged by worldly wisdom and customs, to become a fool for Christ's sake, and to be considered such by all the worldly-wise.

(3) It urges its own claims and rights; it admits that at one time it usurped full control improperly, but declares that it is reformed now. Its proposal, therefore, is that there should be a lasting peace as between the old mind and the new, that the new mind shall have the full right to control in all matters pertaining to religious worship, Sabbath observance and outward deportment, and that the old mind **(reformed)** shall continue to have full charge of business and secular affairs; and that in matters of conscience, respecting dress, amusements, etc., there shall be a compromise between the two minds, which, it suggests, would really be the happy medium and more desirable and in better taste than the extremes of either.

This is the condition represented by the Apostle, when he says, a double-minded man is **inconsistent** in all his ways. And alas, **how many Christians are in this very condition of inconsistency:** they profess on the one hand to be renewed in mind, and are actually so to some extent; yet on the other hand, in many of the affairs of life they are walking not after the spirit's direction but after the will of the flesh. They more or less feel this inconsistency, and their lives are not satisfactory to themselves, and far from satisfactory from the divine standpoint. Nor does the world appreciate them; for frequently it calls them hypocrites, pointing to their inconsistencies as proof. Their course is thoroughly disapproved by the Lord's Word which declares that none such shall constitute the Kingdom class, which shall be composed only of "overcomers," in whom the mind of the spirit has the control, the mastery, bringing even the thoughts of the heart into subjection to the will of God in Christ.

The double-minded man, the man who has two wills in control, and who is obliged to compromise matters continually, by "splitting the difference" between the two minds, will be apt to find the old mind more and more securing control in his heart;—until finally his mind or will becomes as fleshly as it was before grace and truth reached him—full of selfishness. **The only trace of the "new mind" remaining in such will be an outward semblance of respect for righteousness, truth and honesty, a "form of godliness" which, as a mere veneer, will serve to keep up outward appearances and respectability, while inwardly the heart, the will, is completely reprobate.** Such have reached the condition of the scribes and Pharisees of old—they have become mere hypocrites, "whited sepulchres, full of all manner of corruption."

What then is the right attitude of mind, what is the proper course to take? We answer that the proper course is to have only one mind, one will—the will of God—to permit the new mind, the new spirit, the new disposition, to have full control. As the Apostle says, "Let the mind of Christ dwell in you richly and abound," and it will bring forth good fruit, that will be a blessing to yourself and to others, and pleasing to the Lord: and such will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord. We are to place ourselves in every particular under the control of the new mind, and as the Apostle again declares, "Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil its desires." (Rom. 13:14.) The mind of the flesh, the desires of the flesh, are to be considered as mortal enemies,—to be fought against and exterminated so far as possible, and with them there is to be no compromise, no terms, no covenant, no agreement. "Mortify [kill, deaden] therefore your members [your mental members, your depraved tendencies] which are upon the earth."—Col. 3:5.

This same thought of the necessity of having only the one will, the one set of principles before our minds, if we would be successful in making our calling and election sure, was enunciated by our Lord, when he said, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." That is to say, if our eyes be focused in harmony together as one, the object before us will be seen in its true, proper light and shape, but if we were cross-eyed, our eyes glancing in different directions, every object looked at with both eyes would seem distorted. So with the eyes of understanding: if we attempt to look at matters from the heavenly standpoint, and at the same time from the earthly standpoint, the result will be unsatisfactory—confusion, uncertainty, incorrectness of judgment.

As we have found that the old nature, if permitted to have a voice at all, would eventually capture the citadel of the heart, so we find also that if the new nature be granted full sway to overcome the will of the flesh, to bring every thought and word and deed into subjection to the will of God, this also means a growth in grace and in the knowledge and the will of God. It means that the entire heart is thus seized in the name of the Lord, and reckoned as his, and reckoned a pure heart on this account; but it means also a progressive battle with and a progressive victory over the weaknesses, the frailties of our mortal bodies; and it means additionally the establishment, in every quarter of our beings, of fortified defences against the besetments of the world, the flesh and the devil. Thus the developed Christian, whose eye is single to the pleasement of God, and whose mind, purpose or will is single to the service of the one Master, shall, by the grace of God find the ability, more and more, to hinder his flesh from rendering service to Sin. And not only so, but his flesh, once the willing servant of sin until mortified, rendered dead to Sin, shall more and more be quickened, energized, by the new mind, to its service, and thus more and more become a servant of righteousness and of truth: so that it not only will be passively the Lord's, in the sense of not being an opponent of truth and right and purity, but so that it will be the Lord's in a positive sense, aggressively and actively engaged in opposition to sin and error, and in the service of truth and righteousness.—Rom. 8:11.

How the New Mind Should Rule

In the House of Congress, whose Speaker and representative is (sometimes) styled "the Czar and autocrat of the House," we see a most fit illustration for our subject under consideration.

The human brain is scientifically, phrenologically, subdivided into various organs, representative of various propensities or dispositions: these may be illustrated by the various representatives of the various States, assembled in the House of Congress. Each different organ has its own particular thought or interest, yet the will is not the expression of any one organ merely, but the voice of the majority. When a motion or bill is offered in Congress, it may be of special interest to only a few of the members, and the State interests which they represent. In such event, if personal or sectional selfishness ruled amongst the members, the matter in question could not be passed, because the majority would not be sufficiently interested to favor it; and hence, to accomplish its end it would be necessary to appeal to the selfishness of the various other members, by agreeing to favor certain interests of theirs in return for their co-operation. Thus, Congress, if each member and each state stood entirely separate, and without any combination, would be comparatively powerless, unless a degree of patriotism should be shown larger than we would have any reason to expect. Hence the tendency has always been to party division and party co-operation; the party in the majority having the control of the situation, and being held responsible accordingly for the results. So with our minds: if each organ stood wholly separate from the others, it could move only on lines of selfishness, unless it were perfect, which we know it is not. Hence in the human mind, as in Congress, party lines have been established, and for very much the same purpose. In the mind of the Christian the party lines are, the old mind and the new mind, the old self and the new self, the old creature and the new creature, the old will and the new will, the mind of righteousness, and the mind of sin, the mind of love and the mind of selfishness. All these various names describe the same two minds.

In Congress it was found that as its number of representatives increased there was an increased tendency on the part of minorities to baffle or hinder the accomplishment of anything by the majority: the minority party would discuss the subject for hours, days and weeks, if permitted to do so, rather than let the matter go to a vote, in hope that in the end the will of the majority should be frustrated. But the Speaker, co-operating with the leaders of his party, concluded that it was not the intention of the law to hinder legislation, and that consequently the dominant party should have opportunity to proceed to enact the laws which it, as the majority of the body, deemed to be the proper laws. Consequently rules were laid down giving the Speaker, as the representative of the majority, certain privileges and powers, by which the opposition would be limited in its discussion of the various subjects, and the will of the majority more speedily and more thoroughly enacted.

Now this is exactly the condition of things in the human heart, where the teachings of the Lord have been accepted, and where the propensities or organs of the mind have come to a strict party division;—the one the party of truth and righteousness and love, in harmony with the Lord, and the other the party of sin and selfishness, with contrary sentiments. If **conversion** has taken place it means that the higher organs of the mind, sufficient in number or in influence, have gained the control of the mind; that these preponderate in number or in influence; that they constitute the majority, and the evil propensities the minority. Any heart in which the evil propensities are in the majority and in control is an unconverted heart.

And what was found in Congress respecting the disposition of minorities to baffle the will of the ruling majority is found also in our minds, namely, the disposition of our natural mind not only to be heard, but to foil and baffle and render void the will of the new mind, in respect to the control of the affairs of life. What the Scriptures propose to us, therefore, is illustrated again in Congress: the Scriptures propose that the new mind, having obtained the control, shall elect a Speaker, a head, —and that that head or Speaker for our every talent, directing all our interests and all our efforts, shall be Christ Jesus our Lord. They propose that we shall place full authority and power in the hands of the Lord, so that his word and will shall be our will, our law. And how safe it is for us to admit such a Czar, such an autocrat, to control us, since we have learned to know him as the very embodiment of justice, wisdom, and love. Safely we can trust our affairs in his hands.

There are other analogies which might be drawn: for instance, the power of the Speaker of the House rests solely in the fact that it is the power of the majority. If the majority which placed him in power and gave him the authority which he exercises should become a minority, his power would immediately terminate; and the opposition party might give its representative equal power in an opposite direction. So with our hearts; only as our hearts voted to have the Lord in control, did he take charge; and if our wills, the preponderance of our propensities, our judgments, cease to be on the side of the Lord, he no longer retains his power in our hearts and lives, and the evil majority appoint a successor, in line with the selfish propensities, favoring everything selfish.

In Congress, when any matter is brought up, each representative has an opportunity for expressing himself, either directly or indirectly, either on the floor personally, or through representatives in committee. And so with our wills: when a matter is presented by one organ of the mind, the other organs have a chance to respond, and to seek to influence the majority, and to overthrow the rule of righteousness. For instance, a suggestion is made to the mind by the organ of Combativeness, to the effect that there is a good, proper cause why the whole being should be angry, and undertake vengeful retaliation: and under the influence of the eloquence of Combativeness, various other of the lower organs would most surely be aroused: namely, Pride, Self-esteem, Destructiveness, Selfishness, etc., and in addition perhaps some of the higher organs might be temporarily swayed by the old sympathies, prejudice, antipathy, etc., to favor the angry, malicious and resentful course. Conscientiousness might excitedly declare that it was a righteous cause of indignation: Caution might join, and claim that if the thing were not now opposed violently, worse results would follow; even Spirituality and Veneration might be swayed into favoring the angry course, with suggestions that it was in the service of God, and a duty towards God, and toward righteousness, to be angry and to crush the opponent with retaliation and vengeance. Thus, for a moment the entire mind might be swayed toward the side of evil, yet without previous wilfulness or sin—because of the hereditary tendencies of the mind.

But here the gavel of the Speaker is heard. Memory calls attention, and points out that the will of the majority has already been expressed to the contrary of such a course: and calls attention to the rules already adopted:—namely, to put away all anger, malice, hatred and strife, as being in general works of the flesh and of the devil. Memory calls attention to the fact that the majority adopted as the rule of action the words of the Speaker, Christ, "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and speak evil of you." Commit your way unto the Lord, remembering that he has said, "Vengeance is mine, I will recompense." Where the will of the majority of organs is loyal to its own previous decision, the effect of Memory's calling attention to that law will be instantaneous: at once Conscientiousness, Veneration, Spirituality, Caution, and all the higher organs realize that they were about to make a mistake; and immediately they change front, fully supporting the law of the Speaker, Christ. Selfishness, Combativeness, Pride, etc., may attempt to argue the point, but immediately they are called to order and reminded that by vote of the majority they are strictly under the law of Christ, and all further discussion of the subject is forbidden.

Similarly, illustrations might be drawn as representing other passions, tastes or desires of the flesh, which temporarily might seem to gain some control; but from the moment that Memory calls attention to the proposal as being in conflict with the law of the Master, there should be an instantaneous surrender.

Such a course would prove that the will had all along been thoroughly loyal to the Lord, and that he reigns there. It proves the reign of Christ in that heart far better than if no suggestion to the contrary course had come up. And who cannot see that a life thus ordered, and under strictest control of the will of our Head, Jesus Christ, is not only the only proper life (the only one in which the new mind is properly exercised), but in addition to this the only mind which is a "sound mind." People who are continually carried from their moorings by their emotions show that their minds are unsound; such are continually proving to those around them that they have poor judgment. They are frequently angry, troubled, vexed, hurt; or continually falling into one wrong act or another, as they confess afterward. Indeed, the majority of the things at which they take offence, become angry, etc., prove to have been mistakes, nothing having been done or intended to anger, hurt, or injure them. And we know, not only from the Scriptures, but also from our own observation, that the world of mankind in general is thus of unsound mind; and, as the Apostle explains, the only ones in all the world who have even the spirit or disposition of a sound mind are the new creatures in Christ Jesus, who have the new mind, the new will, in control. These, as we have seen, would be liable to be carried away also, by evil passions, evil surmisings, etc., but those who have put themselves fully and completely under the control of Christ and his law are kept from the extremes to which otherwise they would be as subject as others.

"Grant, Lord, a heart, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone;

"A heart in every thought renewed,
And full of love divine,
Perfect and right, and pure and good,
A copy, Lord, of thine."—Z. '98: 211-215.

Ye Serve the Lord Christ

"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."—Col. 3:23, 24.

SERVANTS are specially addressed by the Apostle. He points out to them not only here but elsewhere that all service should be good service, and that whether the person served were one of the Lord's people or an enemy of the truth, the work should not be slighted. The principle of the thing is pointed out, namely, that we are servants of the Lord and therefore his representatives. So then, if we find that we are in the place in which Providence has placed us, we are to serve in that place or position faithfully, perseveringly, interestedly, as though we were laboring for the Lord, and not for men: whereas if we considered ourselves as merely laboring for men, we might labor hard and faithfully for the good, and slightingly for the unkind and froward. But a point to be remembered is that we are all servants: none are called to be masters under the gospel call; one is our master, even Christ, and we all are brethren and fellow-servants. . . .

There is nothing inconsistent with the thought of our being his brethren and still being his servants: nor would there be anything inconsistent with the thought that while all of the Lord's people are brethren some of them might, in a particular sense, be servants of brethren; and both of these thoughts are prominently set before us in the Scriptures. Each one is to share in the others' love, "Love as brethren;" and each one is to share in serving, and to esteem it a special privilege to "serve one another."

Nothing could be much more contrary to the spirit of the world, than this. The spirit of the world is to make other people your servants, and as for you, avoid serving anybody as much as possible. The spirit of Christ, on the contrary, is a spirit of service, and not a spirit of mastery, browbeating, domineering, force, compulsion: it leads those who possess it to seek opportunities for service—to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith:" and to the contrary it leads those under its influence to be very generous and to ask or require only reasonable service from others.

The foundation principles of the Christian religion are laid upon these lines, which are the reverse of the world's lines of thought and conduct; namely, that the greatest one in the Church is the one who is the greatest servant, the one who renders most assistance to others. The greatest servant in the Church was the great Head of the Church himself, who gave even his life on our behalf. And those of his followers who desire to be great in the estimation of the Lord and so esteemed of their fellows, are enjoined that they should follow closely in the Master's footsteps, and with humility of heart be ready and seek to lay down their lives for the brethren. (1 John 3:16.) Nor does this mean simply formal service; it means an actual service. Our Lord's sacrifice, we see, was not merely a form or a show of interest and of love: it was the giving of his life as the purchase price for ours. So with us; we are not merely to love one another and to serve one another, in word, in profession, in title (as for instance, the word "minister" signifies servant); but we are to serve one another as we are to love one another, "in deed and in truth."—1 John 3:18.

Looking about us for opportunity of service we find our Lord's instruction through the Apostle, that we should seek to do good to all men according to our ability and opportunity, but especially to the household of faith. As we look first to the household of faith to see what service we can render, we find in this household some who are naturally more attractive to us than others, some whom we would find it a pleasure to serve; while others, because of more perverse natural conditions, we find less congenial, even repellant; and these we feel less disposed to serve. But this is because of a wrong view of the subject. We are to remember that all consecrated believers are new creatures in Christ Jesus and accepted of the Lord as members of his body, fellow-members with ourselves. From this standpoint only can we realize to the full the significance of the Apostle's words in our text, "Ye do serve the Lord Christ." The Master informs us that the slightest service done to the least of his brethren is accepted as done to himself. With this view of matters clearly in mind, we see our duty of service in a new light. We see that the brother or sister of high spiritual development and possessing more of the Lord's likeness and grace, whose company we find so congenial, and whom we would delight to serve, often needs our service far less than others who are of the same Body, acknowledged by the same Head, who have much more natural depravity, to contend with. These need our special sympathy and love and care and helpfulness; for the proper conception of service is a desire to render some benefit: and there is the more opportunity to benefit or help those who most need assistance.

Of our Lord it is written that he "pleased not himself," in his serving. He did not come into the world on a mission of self-gratification and pleasure; but to render service. He himself said, "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." We are to have his spirit, and the thought with us is not to be our own pleasure or convenience, but on the contrary the necessities of those whom the Lord would have us serve,—namely, those of his household most in need of our aid. We may have less pleasure, according to the flesh, in serving such than we would have in serving others, but it is not fleshly pleasure that we are seeking; and we can have as much or more spiritual pleasure serving those who are the most needy members of the body of Christ, because we realize that this is the will of our Master. **It is to him that we really render the service,** and our highest spiritual pleasure must be in doing those things which are pleasing in his sight. And it is because our Master has so ordered, that **the household of faith is to be served in preference to any other class**; consequently we are to ignore the opinions of the worldly and of the nominal church and not to seek out the most degraded people of the world, and spend our energies upon them, but we are to seek the most needy members of the body of Christ, that we may be most helpful to them. The Lord will attend to the poor heathen world in due time, and the time is now nigh at hand. The first work is, as we have seen from the Scriptures, the preparation of the body of Christ;. and it is to this end that we are to "edify **one another,** building up **one another** in the most holy faith."

Another thought respecting service is that the true service of the Lord and his truth may be a small, humble and comparatively insignificant service, or a larger and more prominent service. And of course, if two opportunities for service offer, which were otherwise alike, we should choose and use the larger and the more important of the two opportunities. But we are to guard ourselves against seeking for large opportunities for service, and overlooking or intentionally passing by smaller opportunities. We believe this a common error amongst those who seek to serve the Lord Christ. They desire to do some great thing for him; they would be overjoyed with the privilege of addressing thousands of intelligent and interested hearers. They fain would sway nations to the Lord's standard. Some would be willing to use smaller opportunities, and to address a hundred or fifty or even less, yet perhaps would think it not worth while to use the little opportunities of everyday life. These services they would esteem too insignificant to render to the Master; they feel that they must do some great thing.

This is a serious mistake, and any who find such a disposition in their hearts should at once analyze their sentiments carefully, to ascertain whether or not they have the desire to serve the Lord, or whether theirs is a desire for self-glorification,—a desire to be identified with something great, prominent and distinguished. The Lord's rule is, not to put a new servant into a very important place. The captains in the Lord's army are expected to rise from the ranks. He tells us the process of his judgment respecting fitness for prominent service when he says, "He that is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in that which is greater." "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; he that exalteth himself shall be abased." And the more we look at the principles here set forth, the more we see of their wisdom and correctness. The person who is earnest and zealous to serve the Lord, so willing and so anxious for the opportunity that he will do what his hand finds to do with his might, that is a true servant; that servant shows his love for the Master,—shows that his is not a love of self and of self-advancement. Such servants, the Lord sees, can be trusted with a more important service, and consequently, when a more important service is to be attended to, usually the Lord selects one who has been faithful in a few things, to give charge over larger things. And who would dispute the wisdom of the Lord's method? He who has not humility enough to do the smallest service for the Lord, for the truth, and for the fellow-members of the body of Christ, has not humility enough to be entrusted with any larger service; for larger service might prove a great injury to himself, since it would tend to cultivate a quality which is latent in every member of the fallen race, and one which would thoroughly incapacitate him for further service, namely, pride,—self conceit and its concomitant evils.

In thus requiring that all who would be followers of his shall be servants, not merely in name, but in deed and in truth and in spirit, our Lord lays down a rule which tends to keep out of his real flock the selfish and ambitious wolves. Yet the danger remains that, if the Lord's flock as a whole in any place loses the real conception of their call, that it is a call to service, the self-seeking disposition is apt to spread as a contagion from one to another of the entire company, until, instead of being servants one of the other, they may become a group of self-seekers; each seeking his own welfare and honor and position, and each neglecting the fact that the chief business of life is to render service to others. And each one who gets into this attitude of self-seeking himself is thereby to a large degree blinded to the proper principles that should govern. And a group of Christians in such a condition might, and very probably would, select as their principal one or leader a person of self seeking disposition, a lord over God's heritage, instead of a servant of the flock.

Seeing that this is the Lord's arrangement, that we are to grow in this grace by noticing and using our opportunities as servants, **we exhort all who may read these lines to be more faithful, henceforth, in seeking for opportunities of service to the Church which is the body of Christ;** and that thus carefully seeking they take heed that they do not pass by some of the small opportunities. Let us remember that our great Master set us an example in this direction, preaching some of his most wonderful sermons to extremely small audiences. For instance: his discourse on the Water of Life, to the woman of Samaria; his discourse on Heavenly versus Earthly things, to Nicodemus; his discourse to Nathaniel, and his discourse to the two who were going to Emmaus, after his resurrection. If we take care of the little opportunities for service, in a humble way, and are faithful in these, and render the service heartily as unto the Lord, we will by and by be granted larger and still larger opportunities. To him that hath used his opportunities shall be granted more, and from him who hath not used his opportunities, that which he has had will be taken from him. "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward. For ye serve the Lord Christ."—Z. '98: 227-230.

"Love as Brethren; Be Sympathetic, Be Courteous"

"Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and showeth favor to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—1 Peter 3:8; 5:5, 6.

THE APOSTLE has been addressing the elders of the Church, exhorting them to give attention to the feeding of God's flock, and pointing out what should be the constraining influence to such a service. That they may feel his sympathy with them he points out that he also is an elder, and then warns them against a tendency, natural to all fallen humanity in any place of influence, to misconstrue their position, and to think of themselves as lords of God's heritage rather than as servants of the flock.

In our day, the natural tendency in this direction is greatly accentuated by the long established custom of all denominations of Christians to regard the ministers or servants of the Church as of a different class from the others of the flock,—a class vested with authority from God, and not amenable to the same regulations which govern all the members of the body. But how great a mistake this is! The Apostle distinctly points out that a servant is not a ruler, that a servant has no authority. Indeed, so far as the true Church is concerned, the only authority in it is the Lord, the Head of the Church, and his Word, and the words of those whom he specially chose to be his mouth-pieces, the apostles.

Where these speak, all of the body of Christ are to give attention to hear. Where these are silent, no one has authority to speak. And while an Elder should be chosen to the position of serving and feeding the flock because of special aptness to teach (to point out the instructions of our Lord and the apostles upon any subject), and while such an Elder should, therefore, in this way be specially helpful to the body of Christ in drawing the attention of all to the inspired authority of the Word, nevertheless any member of the body of Christ has the same privilege—not of exercising authority, but of calling the attention of his fellows to the Word of authority. The Apostle exhorts the Elders that so far from in any manner or degree exercising a lordly or authoritative position in the Church, they should rather be "**ensamples** to the flock." They should be examples in the matter of meekness, in the matter of patience, in the matter of brotherly kindness, in the matter of courtesy, so that the more any of the brethren would copy these Elders the more would the spirit of the Lord prevail in the flock, and the fruits and graces of the spirit be manifested. On the contrary, we know that if the Elder or leader of a little company of the Lord's people be self-assertive, dogmatic, imperious in manner, tone or look, the effect upon the company under his influence is to produce bickerings, rivalries, ambitions, strifes as to who is greatest, etc.

Manifestly, whoever occupies the position of an Elder amongst the Lord's people, however small the group may be, occupies a position fraught with responsibilities to the Lord and to the flock, as well as with besetments to himself. Great care should therefore be exercised by every company of the Lord's people, to so far as possible select for the position of leaders or Elders in the Church such persons as would not be likely to be injured by the privilege of service—such as occupying this post would indeed be ensamples of the flock in humility and in all of the graces of the Lord's spirit. It would seem to be with reference to the special trial of such as occupy this position of service in the Church that the Apostle speaks, saying, "Be not many of you teachers, brethren, knowing that we [occupying such a position] shall receive the severer testing."—James 3:1.

It may not be amiss that here we notice the fact that although the word "Elder" has the significance of "older," yet amongst the Lord's brethren it is not merely years of natural life that is to be taken into consideration; in the Lord's family we sometimes see "babes" with gray hairs. . . .

Nor can we reckon this matter of relationship merely according to the degree of knowledge of the divine plan attained; for, as the Apostle assures us, it is possible for some to have much knowledge and yet be but "tinkling cymbals" according to the Lord's standpoint of estimation. While therefore an Elder, in order to be "apt to teach," must have attained to some considerable degree of knowledge of the divine plan, nevertheless the real evidence of his fitness for the service of an elder must not be determined by his knowledge **merely,** but additionally must be measured by his growth in grace. So then such of the brethren in any place as possess clear knowledge of the divine plan and are "apt to teach," and who additionally give unmistakable evidence that they have grown in grace and are bearing in daily life the fruits of the spirit of the Lord, in considerable measure of maturity, may be considered qualified to be elders;—and such may properly be chosen to the eldership by their brethren, regardless of their age according to the flesh.

According to the flesh Peter and several others of the apostles of our Lord were his elders, but according to the spirit our Lord is the Elder Brother of all accepted to the family of God. According to the flesh both Timothy and Titus were young men —young in years—so that the Apostle needed to write to one of them. "Let no man despise thy youth." (1 Tim. 4:12.) And yet these young men the Apostle recognized as Elders in the Church, who, because of their **spiritual development and knowledge** of the divine plan, **and aptness to teach,** were well qualified to feed the flock of God and to be overseers in it—but not lords, not rulers, not masters, and not vested with any **authority**—merely privileged to call to the attention of the flock the voice of the great Shepherd and his twelve chosen assistants, and to lead them to the green pastures and still waters of divine truth.

It was after specially enjoining modesty and humility upon the ones most advanced and most capable of the flock that the Apostle, in the language of our text, urges that **each one** of the Lord's sheep, so far from seeking to be a leader in the sense of a ruler or lord or master, should seek to be subject one to another—to hear gladly from the humblest of the flock, and to be willing to yield his own preference, so far as his judgment and conscience would permit. A Church operating under this spirit would not be likely to be rent with contention, for each would be so anxious for the interests of the cause and so willing to condescend to the wishes of others, that even the will of the majority would not be considered satisfactory, but rather all would seek, if possible, to reach such a modified conclusion as would meet with nearly or quite unanimous approval.

The Apostle most distinctly points out that the quality essential to such proper conduct on the part of Elders **and on the part of all,** is humility. How beautiful is his exhortation. "Be clothed with humility." The thought would seem to be that outside of every other adornment of character, and covering all others, should be this robe of humble-mindedness, the opposite disposition to pride.

By way of clinching his argument, the Apostle reminds us of the principle upon which our Lord deals with his flock and with all;—that he disapproves of pride, and that all who are actuated by pride may be sure that the Lord, so far from receiving them, fellowshipping them, leading them, blessing them, will resist them, push them from him. The natural inference is that thus resisted of the Lord, the tendency of such as come under the influence of a spirit of pride and ambition will be not toward the truth nor toward any of the fruits and graces of the spirit, but further and further from these. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but supplies his favor to the humble." Come then, dear brethren, says the Apostle, let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time.

The Lord's mighty hand has not yet been stretched out to take hold of mankind in general and its affairs, to bring order out of confusion; but it is stretched out over his Church, his flock. He has called us to be his "sheep," and we have responded and have put ourselves under his care, under his powerful hand for guidance, for direction, etc., that he may ultimately make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," "joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

Seeing that we are under this mighty hand of God, and that too by our own volition, how shall we act? Shall we yield ourselves to his will, and permit him to "work in us both to will and to do his good pleasure" and our ultimate exaltation, or shall we resist the Lord's power, resist his Word of instruction, resist the example set us in the meek and lowly Lamb of God, and seek to exalt ourselves and to be somebodies, either in the world or in the Church? **Nay, let us remember that it would be folly to attempt to work against the divine arrangement**; we might indeed to some extent seemingly succeed, and bring upon ourselves, and perhaps upon others also, more or less of separation from God through such resisting, on account of a wrong spirit; but in the end we should utterly fail of God's favors, both as respects the followship of the spirit now and the fellowship of glory by and by, for these he assures us will be bestowed only upon the humble. Every proper incentive and inducement speaks to us, saying,—Humble yourself: become more like a little child, forgetful of self, devoid of selfish ambition: be actuated merely by a desire to serve the Lord, to serve his flock, and to serve his cause, the truth; forget self entirely.

Perhaps, as a result, the Lord may increase our opportunities and responsibilities in service in the present life, and perhaps he may not; but no matter for this. It is not for the present life that we are seeking and striving, but for the glory, honor and immortality which the Lord has promised to them that love him;—that love him so much that they hearken to his Word and seek to become more and more copies of God's dear Son.

The Apostle adds, "Casting all your care upon him." All true saints of God are care-full. They have an interest in the Lord's work; they have a care in respect to it. They cannot be indifferent to the interests of Zion. Although their hearts and affections and cares have been lifted from a sectarian channel, it is only that they should be placed upon true people of spiritual Zion, whose names are written in heaven. Of course, therefore, every Elder in the Church must feel such a care, especially for the flock in connection with which he has been appointed to service, "to feed the flock of Christ:"—not to shear them, not to frighten them, not to club them, not to exercise authority and lordship over them, but to **feed** them.

This care, affecting the chosen Elders (and all the elders or advanced ones in the Church), although it is a right sentiment in itself, might easily be so perverted as to be dangerous. The Elders, either individually or collectively, might become so nervously careful of the flock as to destroy their own peace and joy in the holy spirit; and **it might also lead them to take various improper steps, as in their over-zealous judgment necessary for the welfare of the flock.** Many in times past have been led, under the influence of such a care, to in various ways take away the liberties of the flock in this or that or another matter: fearful that these liberties would be injurious to the cause. We see such a spirit of carefulness and over-solicitude marked prominently in the past by the various creeds and regulations and restraints put upon the Lord's flock, contrary to the Scriptures and to the liberty wherewith Christ makes free his people. The motive undoubtedly was in some respects a good one; the difficulty was that some Elders, some advanced sheep, caring for the interests of the flock, forgot that they were only **its servants,** and that they were not authorized to make any laws or restraints whatsoever for the flock. They forgot that the Lord himself is the Good Shepherd of his flock still, that he has not given over his care of it, nor his authority to anyone, to permit such to exercise lordship or to make laws of any kind for it, he having made all the laws and regulations necessary, and desiring that his sheep shall be free, with the liberty wherewith he made them free, in the fullest sense of the word.

The remedy for all such unauthorized over-carefulness for the interests of Zion is pointed out by the Apostle, saying,—"Casting all your care upon him [the Shepherd of the flock], for he careth for you [all]." Each sheep is to remember that the Shepherd's mighty hand (mighty power) is still in the midst of his people, and that because of his care we do not need to **overburden** ourselves with care, nor to feel that we must make **changes in his plans** and arrangements to meet what we might fancy to be new exigencies in the case. All such over-carefulness leads to fear, and fear indicates a lack of faith, a lack of confidence in the Shepherd; and is generally used by the great Adversary as one of his most powerful levers to lead the Lord's people into a wrong course.

Let us all, then (all of the advanced or elder class), have a care for the flock; yea, a deep solicitude; but let us cast the weight of this care upon the Lord, and let our faith trust him that he who has been working out so grand and glorious a plan as his Word reveals to us now, "the plan of the ages," has made full provision for every feature, every circumstance, every condition; and let us thus be ready to co-operate with him in harmony with his Word, but not to run where we are not sent, nor in any manner to take our Lord's place, nor attempt to do his work. But only the humble-minded are likely to receive any lasting blessing, present or future, at the hands of our Lord; for he resisteth the proud and showeth favor to the humble.

—Z. '00: 195-197.

The God-Likeness of Forgiving

Matt. 18: 21-35.

"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."—Matt. 6:12.

"Seventy Times Seven"

AFTER our Lord's explanation to his followers how best to avoid taking offence from the brethren and how best to help brethren out of the wrong position of being offenders and being injurious, the matter is brought up afresh by Peter's question regarding the number of times that we should be willing to receive injuries from another and take them patiently, and, exercising a forgiving spirit, should try to have the injuries discontinued. It will be noticed that the Lord is not laying down any rule by which we may deal with the world, but merely the rules which should govern amongst his followers. As respects the world we are to expect opposition, misrepresentation, slander, opposition of every kind. "Marvel not if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you"—"Whosoever will live godly in this present life shall suffer persecution."—John 15: 18; 2 Tim. 3: 12.

Such oppositions from the world we are to take as a matter of course, and not be surprised at the fiery trials that will try us, but to consider that the Lord is wise in permitting such experiences and able to make them all work out for our good. It is within the household of faith that the special trials sometimes come, from the very quarter whence we least expect them, but these also must be taken patiently; we must not render evil for evil nor railing for railing toward the Lord's members nor toward the world; we must, as the Apostle says, be patient toward all.

Notice that Peter's query is, If my brother trespass against me how often shall I forgive him? Seven times? Peter no doubt had in mind the thought that seven was the symbol of perfection, and that this might mark the reasonable limit of mercy and forgiveness. He did not, of course, consider that if that were a divine law it would mean that he himself might be forgiven of the Lord not more than seven times for imperfections, shortcomings, etc. Our Lord's answer is broad and sweeping—"I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven." Some are disposed to translate this until seventy and seven times, but evidently the Lord's intention was to imply that forgiveness should be granted as often as it is sought with any manifestation whatever of sincerity.

This is not merely advice from the Master to his followers—IT IS A COMMAND. **It is not optional with us how we shall do toward our brother, for the great Teacher has assured us that if we have not the forgiving spirit we cannot be his disciples.** His words are, "If ye do not from the heart forgive men their trespasses neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses." All, then, who realize their need of divine mercy and forgiveness and who receive the great Teacher's instruction on this point will be careful to cultivate in their hearts in every sense a forgiving spirit, a loving, generous disposition. And by this all men may know the disciples of the Lord of mercy. We quote Dr. Peloubet:—

"Our hearts are like reservoirs, and outward occasions draw out whatever is within and only that. If they are full of love and forgiveness, kindness and desire to help, then no matter how often—seventy times or seventy times seven—some act of others call forth the feelings of the heart, it will be met by love and forgiveness and help. As all need to be forgiven, so all need to forgive. There are enemies who injure us by word and deed. There are others who say evil things about us carelessly and attribute wrong motives, pervert what we do and say. 'They speak daggers.' Insults are offered, even friends sometimes do the most annoying and trying things, that are apt to remain in the memory and fester like a thorn in the flesh."

"The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear;
And something every day they live
To pity—and perhaps forgive."

. . . .

"An old Spanish writer says, 'To return evil for good is devilish; to return good for good is human; but to return good for evil is Godlike.' " . . .

The Debt of a King's Officer

By way of impressing this lesson our Lord gave a parable to his disciples. This parable represented a great king who, making an accounting with his officers charged with the collection of taxes, found one of them short in his accounts in a very large sum, ten thousand talents, estimated to represent nine million dollars. Justice laid hold upon the debtor and was about to execute its penalty when he appealed for mercy and extension of time in which to make good the deficiency. The king was compassionate, forbore the collection of the debt and let the servant go free.

This is our Lord's illustration of the proper exercise of mercy. The one thus dealt with does not represent the world of sinners, Adam and his race, for whose deliverance from the penalty a ransom price is demanded from justice. This parable is often thus used improperly against the Bible argument of the teaching of the ransom, that the death penalty against Adam and his race could not be lifted or set aside except by the payment of the ransom price, the corresponding price, our Lord's death. That this is not the teaching is clearly shown by the statement, "The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a certain king which would make a reckoning with his servants," etc. This declaration respecting the Kingdom of Heaven lifts the parable entirely out of connection with the world in general, which is not either in embryo or otherwise the Kingdom of Heaven: it definitely locates the parable in the Church, and these servants of the king as amongst those who have already been justified through faith in Christ and who have already made consecration of themselves to the Lord and become thus his servants entrusted with his goods. The signification of this feature of the parable, then, is that if any of the Lord's people, his disciples, come short they have a throne of grace and mercy to which they may approach that they may "obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. 4:16.

The Debt of a Fellow-Servant

As representing the wrong course, the reprehensible course of some, the Lord in the parable before us pictures the forgiven officer as going forth from his king's presence with the latter's kind words still ringing in his ears and in the exercise of his unmerited freedom, and, finding a fellow-servant who owed him an hundred pence—a small bet probably representing not more than a hundred dollars proportionately in our money and time. Instead of a proper and generous feeling toward his fellow-servant, instead of sympathy and love for him corresponding to that which had been bestowed by the king upon himself, this servant caught the lesser debtor by the throat saying, "Pay me that thou owest." The fellow-servant used toward him the very same words that he had used to the king, saying, "Have mercy upon me and I will pay thee all." But he did not, but cast him into a prison. He was hardhearted, not at all after the likeness of his generous master, the king. Even his fellow-servants recognized this; they felt a pity for the unfortunate one and told it unto their lord. They knew well enough the king's generous disposition to be sure that he would not favor such an intemperate exercise of justice.

The king sent for his officer and upbraided him for the matter, saying, I remitted thy debt because thou besoughtest me; I showed mercy to you. Should you not also have shown mercy to your fellow-servant? The question was left without an answer—the answer was clearly enough implied. He who had received so great mercy should have been moved with compassion toward a fellow-servant in a small affair. The king was wroth, was angry, with that servant, justly so. He had proven himself unworthy of the mercy bestowed upon him. Nor was it too late yet to punish him for the matter, for his debt had merely been remitted or set aside and not blotted out. Thus it is with all of the Lord's people; we are dealt with on the basis of faith; God is in earnest if we are in earnest. Our blemishes and shortcomings will not be permitted to stand between us and the glorious things to which we have been called if we are faithful to the extent of our ability, and if as a part of that faithfulness we have the Spirit of Christ, for if we have not the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, the spirit of forgiveness, gentleness, etc., we are none of his.

It is in line with this that the Apostle writes that sins shall be blotted out at the second coming of Christ. (Acts 3:19.) They will be blotted out when in the resurrection we come forth as New Creatures, sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown natural or human bodies, raised spiritual bodies, glorious. Then that which is perfect having come, all the imperfections and blemishes will be fully blotted out, never to be revived either by the Lord or others. But meantime, while we have our standing of faith, our blemishes are merely covered while we are permitted to give a demonstration of the loyalty and sincerity of our consecration and earnestness of desire to walk in the footsteps of the Lord.

What the Unmerciful May Expect

Our Lord, after concluding the parable, makes a direct application of it to his disciples, not to the world, although in a certain sense or degree there is a general principle expressed which is applicable to the world in proportion as each comes under enlightenment and instruction. Our Lord says, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." **How solemn these words, how clear cut, how unmistakable their import. In no uncertain terms they assure us that whatever our faith, whatever our works, they all amount to nothing if we do not attain to that spirit of love which is merciful, generous, long suffering, patient toward those who do injury to us,** whether they be brethren of whom we might expect the more, or whether they be enemies of the world from whom we must expect less consideration. Mercy is an element of love, and Love is the fulfilling of the whole law of God.

The propriety of the Lord in thus dealing with us is evident. He is seeking a special class for the Kingdom—to be associates with our Lord Jesus in the great work of ruling and blessing the world. Only those who possess the divine character of patience, forbearance, sympathy, compassion, mercy, love, could possibly be suited to the divine purpose in respect to the great work of blessing all the families of the earth. We are accepted in Christ because of our profession that we love these qualities in him and desire to be copies of God's dear Son.

The king delivered the unmerciful servant to the tormentors. Such was the custom of oriental countries at that time and to some extent still. We are not to understand that our Lord had sympathy with those barbarous customs, but that he was speaking to the people from the standpoint of custom which they would understand. . . .

"Forgive Us as We Forgive Others"

It will be remembered that in our Lord's prayer he sets forth this principle for our instruction and guidance, that we must not expect of the heavenly Father mercy for our shortcomings and blemishes and continuance in his favor and ultimately joint-heirship in his Kingdom, unless we cultivate in ourselves the same spirit. How beautifully and how simply the Lord states this matter in the prayer, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." (Matt. 6:12.) How emphatically the Lord states it again, saying, "If ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6:14, 15.) These trespasses, be it noted again, do not refer to the one original sin on account of which condemnation of death passed upon the whole human family and on account of which Christ died and on account of which the curse is ultimately to be rolled from every member of the race so that there shall be no more curse. (Rev. 22:3.) These trespasses are our own individual shortcomings and blemishes which we have inherited and which the Lord is very willing to overlook and excuse for those who will comply with the conditions of their Covenant and be followers of the Lord Jesus, filled with his Spirit and striving to walk in his steps.—Z. '06:197-200.

Anointing "The Feet" of Christ

"She hath done what she could."—Mark 14:8.

WE CAN scarcely think of a higher ecomium that could have come from the Master's lips to any of His followers. This expression of Jesus, then, should be of special comfort, particularly so to the sisters in the Church. They have not all the opportunities that the brethren have of service in the Truth. There are certain limitations of the sex, and these, of course, were upon Mary. She did not have the privilege of going about with Jesus to hear all of His teachings, and of co-operating with Him in that way, nor of being one of the seventy sent out to do mighty works, to proclaim the Kingdom.

But not discouraged by these limitations, **Mary was very much on the alert to improve all the opportunities that she had.** She and her family had been special friends of Jesus—for how long a time we do not know. But we know that He frequently went to their home; and the Scriptures testify that "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus."—John 11:5.

When Lazarus fell sick, the sisters sent Him word, "He whom Thou lovest is sick." They manifested their faith and submission also as to what answer would come—as to whether He would simply send word, or bless a handkerchief, or what not. They felt that He would care for them—being a special friend of the family.

It must have been a great trial of their faith when our Lord remained away, when Lazarus died, when the funeral took place. On the fourth day after, Jesus came to Bethany—too late to do any good! We remember that then Mary, who had sat at Jesus' feet to be taught of Him, was so overcome because He had not sent some help in her brother's case, that she did not feel that she even wished to see the Lord. She did not feel like honoring Him. So when she heard that He had come, she sat still in the house, and did not go to greet Him. Of course, after Jesus had called forth Lazarus from the tomb, her faith and love and zeal were revived and intensified. Her faith had been sorely tried and tested, and had finally triumphed.

On this occasion, when Jesus came up to Jerusalem, prior to the crucifixion, He came to their home as usual. Then Lazarus and Martha and Mary made quite a feast, at which there were present some of the Pharisees from the city of Jerusalem. After this feast, Jesus rode upon the ass into Jerusalem, and was proclaimed King by a multitude of disciples. It looked as if things were getting very favorable, and as if very soon the people would receive Him as King.—Luke 19:37-40.

Some had previously wondered and some had persisted in faith. These thought that now was the moment of Jesus' glorification, and this, they felt sure, meant also their own glorification. When He came into Jerusalem, He drove out the money-changers from the Temple, and all things seemed auspicious. Later on, some of the scribes and Pharisees tried to show up the fallacy of His teachings, and they were all put to flight, so that they were afraid to ask him questions, because it did more harm than good.—Luke 20:40.

Fault-Finding Antagonistic to Love

The common people were in favor of Jesus, but the leaders were much discontented. They said, "The Romans will treat us badly and not give us any liberty, if we allow this thing to go on. It will bring us all into disgrace." So the high priest said, "It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." (John 11:50.) But this determination was to be kept quiet. The chief priest and rulers, therefore, worked secretly.

Just before the day of the crucifixion, Jesus was again in the home of Lazarus and Martha and Mary. It was on this occasion that Mary took the opportunity of breaking a box of ointment and pouring it over the head of Jesus. This ointment was not oil—such ointment as we use today—but very expensive perfume. The alabaster package in which this was put up was apparently a small vase.

Mary broke the vase—probably uncorked it—that she might pour out the ointment. In this way she manifested her high appreciation of His being a Guest at their home. To Mary our Lord was not simply a great man. To her He was more. He was the Messiah. So far as she understood, she adored Him, reverenced Him as her Lord; and she took this opportunity for showing her devotion by pouring upon Him the precious perfume.

One of the disciples, Judas, rebuked the woman, saying, "This is a shameful waste of money, this ointment was valuable." Such ointments were much more expensive at that time than now. By the synthetic process we can now manufacture almost any odor without using even one flower. But the process used in olden times made it much more costly.

As Judas was upbraiding Mary, Jesus stopped him, saying, "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on Me. . . . She hath done what she could." She has manifested her love, her devotion. She has not followed Me as you disciples have done. She had the restrictions of her sex upon her. But this is one thing that she could do, and one thing that she did. I appreciate what she has done. She has anointed Me for My burial.—Mark 14:6, 8.

The Master's Tribute of Approval

We may suppose that these would seem very strange words for the Master to use—"She hath anointed My body aforehand for the burying." The disciples thought He would not die. But Jesus was so in the habit of saying peculiar things that if they stopped to quarrel over them, they would have been led away from Him. On one occasion He had said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." (John 6:53.) This saying had perplexed them greatly. When He said He was about to be crucified, they thought, How can He use language which is so untruthful? And when St. Peter said, "Be it far from Thee, Lord! This shall not be unto Thee!" Jesus upbraided him.—Matthew 16:22, 23.

These words, these things, came to their remembrance in future days; and thus their faith and hope and trust were much intensified and were made more precious. Thus also our faith has been strengthened.

Applying to ourselves Jesus' words to Mary, we can see that no one could have a higher tribute from the Master's lips than the approval given to Mary's act. Apparently it meant: She cannot do more—she has done **all she could.** There is encouragement in these words for all of us. However brethren may criticize us, if we are sure that our hearts have been loyal to the Lord, we may be sure that He will say of us sympathetically, **"It is not any great thing that they can do, but they are doing what they can."** As the Heavenly Father looks down upon us, He must see that we are doing very little. It is comforting, however, for us to know that the Heavenly Father is pleased to look down upon us, and that He sees that we are trying to do what we can.

This text should be of special encouragement to the sisters. They have more special opportunities, in a more private manner, of ministering to the Body of Christ. Of course it does not mean that the brethren are not to minister to the Body of Christ—to wash one another's feet, etc.—but it points specially to the privilege of the sisters—the anointing of the Head and the feet.

Antitypical Perfume on Antitypical Feet

We of today are in a very special sense the feet members. This expression is specially applicable to those who are living now—the last members of the Body of Christ, the Church. The expression, "anointing the feet," seems to call attention to the fact that any service done to any member of the Body of Christ will be esteemed a service to Him.

He will say of all who thus serve Him that they have done what they could.

Mary's conduct in this case, and her deep humility, are in strange contrast with that of the Apostles on the next day. When they had assembled for the Passover Supper, they felt their own importance so much that they were not willing to be servants to each other. They were going to be kings on the Throne. Therefore they were not going to wash each other's feet; and not only so, but they were not going to wash the Master's feet. Then the Master washed their feet, and set them an example.

This is a special time for seeking to honor one another, to serve one another and to strengthen each other's hearts. The perfume itself is a beautiful picture of love and devotion, and illustrates the manner in which we can pour perfume on each other by speaking graciously to each other, and by seeking to see the best that there is in one another. "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor."—Ephesians 5:1, 2. Z. '13: 134, 135.

Pressing Forward

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before."—Phil. 3:13.

Tho disappointments, keenly felt,
  Have traced care on thy brow;
Tho hopes have perished that have caused
  Thy heart in grief to bow;
Tho friends have failed thee whom thou loved,
  And foes with wicked dart
Have drawn the cruel bow of scorn
  To pierce thy breaking heart:

Be vigilant, be strong, be true,
  And quit thee like a man;
Be diligent God's will to know—
  Submissive to his plan;
Heed not the counseling of men,
  E'en tho in love 'tis given,
(Shortsighted it is apt to be,
  And lead thee far from Heaven.)

But ready be to follow Christ,
  Wherever he may lead;
To voice of stranger hearken not,
  But to his voice give heed.
Through evil or through good report
  Undaunted follow on;
Your feet will never find a path,
  But there your Lord has gone.

And what if men may look askance
  And sneer and laugh and scorn?
You'll never feel a pang of pain,
  But that your Lord has borne;
The trials of this present life
  Are not to be compared
To glory we shall share with him,
  Whose sufferings we have shared.

—Z. '99: 181.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

There is no more dangerous form of high-mindedness or self-conceit than that which attacks the Christian, and seeks to make him think of himself more highly than he ought to think. Very many of the Lord's people have been ensnared along such lines, and stumbled into all the other evils by first of all getting the impression that for some reason, or for no reason the Lord had specially taken a fancy to them, and was giving them private lessons and information not vouchsafed to others of his consecrated ones. How appropriate the Apostle's caution along this line. "I say, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Rom. 12:3.) Z. '99: 103.

◆

Let us be assured that we are in the sifting and separating time, and that all who have not the spirit of humility, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love, will surely be separated. 1 John 2:19. Z. '98: 368.

Those who are brought closest to the divine presence, and who see the divine glories and majesty most distinctly, with the eyes of their understanding and who realize most fully the holiness and perfection of our God—these feel, more than do others, their own blemishes and shortcomings and unworthiness, although actually they are far superior to others of the human family, else they would never be granted such insights to the divine plan, character and coming glory. Humility is not only an appropriate grace for all who are blemished through the fall, but it is appropriate also to the angels, for is it not one of the fruits of the holy spirit, as pointed out by the Apostle? Whoever has a deep humility of heart, an intense appreciation of his own demerits, and of the divine perfection, is in a condition of heart ready for divine blessing and for usefulness in the divine service, while the pharisaical who claim perfection for themselves in thought, word or deed, are in a condition of heart that is deplorable, and are wholly unfit to be used of the Lord.—Z. '98: 305.

A story is told of how a private soldier in Napoleon's army exercised faith in his word, and as a result of acting thereon received promotion to a captaincy. Napoleon was reviewing his army in the city of Paris, when the bridle dropped from his hand and the horse started on a gallop. A soldier leaped from the ranks, caught the horse and returned the bridle to Napoleon. The Emperor thanked him, saying, "Much obliged, captain." The soldier immediately responded, "Of what regiment, sir?" And the Emperor, pleased with his quickness and confidence, answered, "Of the Guards." The soldier immediately took his place amongst the officers, although his clothes were those of a private and notwithstanding the fact that they ridiculed his faith. He believed the Emperor's words, and acted on that belief, and was a captain. So our Lord has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature;" and those who will attain the exceeding great and precious things which God has in reservation for them who love him will be the ones who take him at his word, become "children of the light," and "walk in the light." Such, ultimately, shall be members of the great Sun of Righteousness, which shall arise with healing in its beams, to refresh and bless the world by scattering the darkness of sin, superstition, evil. Matt. 13:43. Z. '99:29.

◇

Our armor is a front armor, not a back armor. It is invulnerable so long as we stand firm for the right, the truth, in our great Captain's name and strength—it is a hindrance to those who draw back.—Z. '99:5.

◇

Only from the inside can the great plan of God be seen and appreciated, and only the "brethren" are admitted to this inside view. "If any man will do his (the Father's) will, he shall know of the doctrine."—John 7:17. Z. '99:88.

◇

Being actually perfect our Lord needed not to run to get to the mark, for he was actually there, even as the perfect man. It was for him to "stand" firmly and uncompromisingly at this "mark" as it is exhorted of us that after "having done all" we should stand complete in him. This standing at the mark is the real trial, the real test. To stand is to be an "overcomer" of the world, the flesh and the devil.—Z. '07:260.

◇

The Lord's people will obtain a blessing in proportion as they are prepared to receive all opportunities for God's Service as divine favors and to appreciate them, no matter how humble the conditions.—Z. '00:9.

◇

And how appropriate it is that all cross-bearers should recognize each other, and be able to sympathize with one another, and give an encouraging word, a sympathizing look or a helping hand, as opportunity may offer. As for others, we cannot expect sympathy from them, for from their standpoint we are counted fools. (Acts 26:24; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2:14; 3:18). Z. '00:118.

The duty of the spiritual Israelite is to worship the Lord according to the dictates of his own conscience, and to leave everybody else free to do the same.—Z. '98:288.

◇

Some of the Lord's people boast that they do their own thinking. But the wisest course is for us to do our own believing.—Z. '12:98.

◇

The Lord has not at the present time two flocks, one of them hearing and obeying his voice, and the other heedless of his words. He declares, "My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me." Those who are not following the Lord, in obedience to his voice, expressed in word and example, are not of his flock; they are not being led to the green pastures and still waters of present truth; their table is not furnished in the presence of their foes; nor are they in the way marked out by the divine goodness and mercy, to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.—Psa. 23. Z. '99:63.

◇

"O, FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING MY GREAT REDEEMER'S PRAISE"

It is well that we have the sentiment here expressed, and the desire to praise the Lord a thousand-fold more than we have ability; but we do well to remember that the Lord looks for something more than songs and thankfulness: he looks for evidences of appreciation of his grace and his promises, he looks for evidences of our appropriation of these, in harmony with his design in giving them. If, then, he has fulfilled his promise that at his second presence he will gird himself as a servant and come forth to serve those who hear his knock and open their hearts to receive him, we may properly infer that the strengthening food he is now providing for his people is in some sense of the word necessary to them. It is so necessary that if they receive it not, if they feed not upon it, if they are not made thereby strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, it will ultimately be greatly to their disadvantage.

We write thus because we observe that some who rejoice greatly in the bountiful supply provided by the Lord and who love to sing of his blessings, mercies, etc., seem not to be giving sufficiency of attention to the repast itself. They remind one of the man who purchased an encyclopedia and never used it, but often praised it and took great pleasure in it, with the thought that the information was there if ever he should need it. Some of the Lord's dear people seem disposed to do after this manner with the precious things of divine truth which are now in their hands. They would keep the volumes, etc., in their libraries, they would praise them, . . . but neglect to read them—they permit the cares of this life, . . . etc., to consume their time, the precious moments, the precious hours, the golden opportunities, so that they do not feast upon the viands provided by the Lord. The time is surely coming when the rejoicings of this class will be less—when the winds of persecution and opposition shall be let loose and play upon them. We fear that many will not have the sufficiency of foundation for their faith and love to stand the crucial tests of that time.—Z. '07:148.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER THIRTY-EIGHT

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The Faithful Servant

Good servant, enter in:
  Thou hast been faithful found
In righteous stewardship
  O'er the entrusted pound.
The honor of my house,
  My Kingdom, thou hast sought;
Thy life thou more and more
  A sacrifice hast brought.

In nothing hast thou had
  Self-interest for thine aim.
Naught seemed too small nor great
  To glorify my Name.
My yoke hast easy called,
  My burden took on thee,
And every day with joy
  Hast borne it after me.

Good servant, enter in,
  And faith's reward now share:
With me upon my throne
  A crown of life now wear.
For he who, without fear,
  In small the great hast traced,
O'er few things faithful here,
  O'er many shall be placed.

A thousand years full soon
  Thou mayest reign with me:
Thee will I also grace
  With priestly dignity,
Till all the tribes of earth
  Claim God to be their Lord,
To whom I then return
  The Kingdom at his word.—Z. '92:214.

It is not for us to inquire why the Lord adopts certain plans which differ from those which our poor finite minds might arrange for him: rather it is for us to acknowledge that our wisdom is insufficient on such a subject.—Z. '01:23.

◆

All of the Lord's people need to remember that in proportion as they are ambassadors of the Lord, and his representatives, it will be their privilege not only by and by in the Kingdom to "comfort all that mourn," and to be the trees of righteousness, whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations (Rev. 22:2), but they should remember that in the present life they have a ministry of comfort to perform also, toward all who mourn **in Zion**—toward all of the Lord's people who are in any tribulation, physical or mental disquiet.—Z. '00:215.

◆

Since we are not all alike fallen, not all alike selfish, it follows that some walk much nearer to the spirit of the divine Law, attain much closer to the measurement required by the Golden Rule, than can others; yet no fallen creature can walk fully up to the requirements of the Golden Rule, so long as handicapped by the various weaknesses of the flesh: and here the grace of God in Christ makes up our deficiencies; those who are able to follow the pattern most closely are still far from following it absolutely, and consequently need to have the merit of the precious blood of Christ imputed to them to make up for their shortcomings; and those who are still more fallen, and who, with their very best efforts, are still further from measuring up to the grand standard of the Golden Rule, need that much more of God's grace to compensate for their deficiencies. Hence the Apostle declares that where sin and imperfection abound the most, there God's grace correspondingly abounds the more; so that to those who are in Christ and seek to walk in his footsteps, who are in their hearts measuring themselves with the Golden Rule, and seeking to the best of their **ability** to live up to its requirements, may be succeeding variously in their endeavors, from the worldly standpoint; but from the divine standpoint all such are reckoned as having their blemishes fully covered with the merit of our dear Redeemer's sacrifice, and that therefore the righteousness of the Law, its true meaning, its spirit, and the true measure of the golden rule is reckoned as **fulfilled** in them to divine acceptance,—perfectly.—Z. '00:268.

◆

Jehovah is gracious and full of compassion: he knows that the motions of sin are in our flesh, tending downward, and in his great mercy and compassion he has provided in Jesus for our every difficulty, our every trial, for the covering of our every weakness and imperfection, and with those who become his people, and who even haltingly seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, he is slow to anger and of great mercy.—Z. '00:312.

◆

It is only when by the grace of God the eyes of our understanding are opened to see how our heavenly Father is not against us, but **for us**, and how under his providential arrangement all things are working together for good to those who love, and who are seeking to attain to the gracious things which he has offered them in his Word,—only then are we enabled to know him, appreciate him, and to offer him, in the best and fullest sense of the word, the tribute of our hearts and the praise of our lips.—Z. '00:312.

CONVENTION

Minneapolis, Minn., August 13th, 14th and 15th. Brother C. A. Hallberg, 4153 21st Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn., Secretary of Convention.

All Standfast Bible Students are heartily invited to attend. Brothers Palmer and Bartlett will be the speakers, possibly assisted by some of the local Elders.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER THIRTY-EIGHT

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"Where a brother gives an interpretation of a Scripture which differs from that given by Brother Russell, and Brother Russell's interpretation seems reasonable and in harmony with the plan of God, then we believe it a safe rule to follow Brother Russell's interpretation, for the reason that he is the servant of the Church, so constituted by the Lord for the Laodicean period; and therefore we should expect the Lord to teach us through Him. Where there arises a doubt in the mind as to which interpretation is correct, then it is always safer to resolve that doubt in favor of Brother Russell's interpretation. We believe such to be in harmony with the Lord's will. Z. '18: 51.

God's Blessing Brings Riches

"The blessing of Jehovah it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."—Prov. 10:22.

HOW REASONABLE it seems that those who become God's friends, and especially those who are adopted into his family as children, should be blessed of him in multitudinous ways, in which others of mankind, who are aliens, strangers, and foreigners to him through wicked works (Col. 1:21), should not be blessed. We look back into the past and see father Adam, while in divine favor, very rich,—the possessor of the whole world, filled with bounties. We read of father Abraham, "the friend of God," very rich in cattle and goods: and Jacob, although losing all inheritance in his father's estate, was blessed of the Lord, so that he became very rich in flocks and in herds. So Israel was promised that if as a nation they would be obedient to the Lord they should be blessed in all of their temporal affairs; their land would bring forth bountifully: they would not be afflicted with drought or pests; their flocks and herds should prosper and multiply exceedingly, and even their physical health was provided for, so that God guaranteed them that abiding in his favor as a people they should not be subject to pestilences, diseases, etc., for the Lord himself would be their physician to preserve to them health and every prosperity.

However, with the introduction of the new age, the Gospel age, came a great change—not in the divine plan, but in the divine dealings; and henceforth the favored of the Lord were not promised earthly blessings and good things, nor immunity from sickness and pain and persecution; but to the contrary of this, they were assured that whoever would be received into God's family on the high plane of sonship, begotten of the spirit, and, prospectively, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, would be required to pass through experiences of suffering more than others; of trials of faith and of patience and of character to which others would not be subjected; and they were instructed that these adversities should be accepted by them as marks of divine favor, as evidences that God was dealing with them as with sons, and by these experiences fitting and preparing them for positions of honor, and untellable blessings in the future. (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 12:6-8.) "Eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." —1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

In harmony with this change of dispensation, we find the New Testament declaration to be to the effect that those accepted to this high honor of sonship (John 1:12) should not expect earthly riches or temporal blessings or marks of divine favor, but that, quite to the contrary, the Apostle says, "Hearken my beloved brethren: hath not God [as a rule] chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:5.) And again he assures us that not many great, not many rich,* not many mighty, not many wise, according to the course of the world, are to be found amongst the called and sanctified sons of God.—1 Cor. 1:26-29. . . .

The beginning of these terms or conditions of this age was with the great Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus—he must sacrifice ere he could be made the King, and have the power and authority to bless. His sacrifice, as is well known, was a comprehensive one; it began with the sacrifice of his riches, and ended with the sacrifice of his life. "He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might [eventually, in the Millennial Kingdom] be made rich." (2 Cor. 8:9.) His wealth, consisting of heavenly glory and, subsequently, of human talents, and every kind of good possessions, was all sacrificed, including even his reputation, so that the Apostle declares, "He made himself of no reputation." His will also was sacrificed,—the strongest individual thing that any being can possess; as he himself declared, he sought not his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him. His life, the most precious thing to any intelligent creature, was freely laid down, a sacrifice, a sin-offering, in harmony with the divine plan, on our behalf. —Phil. 2:5-8—Diaglott.

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* Riches, while generally applied to money and physical comforts and opulence, may properly enough be applied to any valuable possession; as, for instance, one might be rich in talents of music or oratory or art; or he might be rich in mental endowment which would carry with it weight of influence amongst men.

But all these sacrifices led, under divine providence and promise, to still greater riches, greater honors and greater powers, as the Apostle, after reciting how our Lord humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross, declares.—"Wherefore, [as a reward for this sacrifice] God hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a name that is above every name;" he has been exalted "far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named." He has been given a name more excellent than all others, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. (Phil. 2:9-11.) It is by virtue of his sacrifice of riches and honors and will and life itself that our dear Redeemer is now the great and glorious Royal High Priest, with all power in heaven and in earth, which he soon will take to himself. (Rev. 11:17.) Soon he will exercise it in accomplishing the wonderful work which he already has begun, and which it is the Father's good pleasure that he shall complete: viz., of subduing all things, and bringing all sin and rebellion against divine authority into subjection, rescuing so many as desire to return to harmony with their Creator and his laws, and destroying with an everlasting destruction all who love and practise sin knowingly and wilfully.

These, our dear Redeemer's experiences, are set before believers as an example. . . . None of his followers have anything of value to sacrifice. It cannot be said of them, as of their Redeemer, that they were rich and became poor; on the contrary, they are all poor as respects everything that could be considered true riches. Even their own righteousness was as filthy rags, which needed to be replaced with the imputed robe of the Savior's righteousness (justification), ere they could be invited to be his followers. . . .

The Apostle speaks of the deceitfulness of riches: and on every hand we may witness this deceitfulness: we see how often earthly wealth deceives and misleads and corrupts the reasoning powers, and turns aside the force of God's Word to those who possess it. We see the same in respect to the wealth of influence, how those who possess this wealth frequently deceive themselves, and hoard it, and refuse to sacrifice it for the truth, for the Lord, for his cause. We see the same deception operating powerfully in those who possess a wealth of talent in any direction; they feel like keeping all of it for self, and if not all, the larger and choicer parts; they are deceived into thinking this is the right course, notwithstanding the Scriptures so plainly declare that our privileges in connection with these is that of **sacrifice.** As a whole, then, we daily witness, as the Scriptures declare, that those who possess any kind of riches, wealth, talent or influence, are rarely amongst the sacrificers. We might almost say, Blessed are those who are poor in this world's goods, and in talents and in influence, for they having practically nothing to sacrifice to the Lord but their wills, find it easier to comply with the conditions, and we presume that the larger proportion of those who will through faith inherit the Kingdom will consequently be of this poor class, rich in faith only.—Jas. 2:5.

When we would see a noble example, like that of our Lord, who was rich in everything, and who gave all, we rejoice in it, and realize that as his sacrifice was so great his reward also is proportionately great. When we see the noble example of the Apostle Paul, who possessing some considerable wealth of ability, talent and influence, and possibly of financial means also, laid these all, a willing, a glad sacrifice, at the feet of the Lord, laying them all down with joy in God's service, in the service of the truth, in the service of the brethren, it causes our hearts to rejoice, and we feel sure that one so rich, and who spent his riches so faithfully, will be one to shine very brightly in the Kingdom, when it is set up and manifested. And so, undoubtedly, it will be with all the royal priesthood,—in proportion as they have sacrificed their possessions. Those who joyfully endure for the Lord's sake, the truth's sake, the greatest shame, the greatest ignominy, the greatest trials, the greatest persecutions in this present life, and thus have experiences most like those of the Master and Pattern, we may be sure will in proportion to their faithfulness manifested in such sacrifices, have a future great reward;—as the Apostle has declared, "star differeth from star in glory."—1 Cor. 15:40-44.

Heavenly Versus Earthly Riches

We have said that the heavenly riches are to be attained in the resurrection, when the Millennial Kingdom shall be inaugurated, and the faithful overcomers, by their resurrection change, shall be richly endowed with all the good things which God hath in reservation for them that love him, and who prove their love by present-time devotions, sacrifices, etc. But, we should notice that there is a foretaste of these heavenly blessings granted to the faithful in this present life; these heavenly riches granted us now the Apostle speaks of as "riches of grace" (Eph. 1:7, 18), and these grace-riches include faith, hope, and joy in the holy spirit and an ability to see and appreciate with the eye of faith things actually not seen as yet. The Apostle declares that these treasures of wisdom and grace—knowledge of divine good things in reservation, and the fellowship with God which permits us to anticipate and enjoy those blessings in a measure now, are all **hidden in Christ,** "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. 2:3.) We must come into Christ, as members of his body, the true Church, by sacrifice,—before we can have the opportunity of even searching for these hidden treasures, or of finding any of them. And then, as we progress faithfully in our sacrificial service, as priests, walking in the footsteps of the great High Priest, we find more and more of these true "riches of grace."

Moreover, another kind of riches comes to the royal priesthood, faithful in performing their self-sacrifices. These are riches of the holy spirit. They find as they sacrifice the selfish interests, earthly aims, earthly projects, etc., in the service of the Lord and the Truth, that they grow more and more in likeness to their heavenly Father and to their Lord, and that the fruits of the holy spirit abound in them more and more—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love.

Furthermore, they find a peace and a joy to which formerly they were strangers, and which the world can neither give nor take away. This peace and joy come through a realization that having given their all to the Lord, all of his exceeding great and precious promises **belong** to them. Now their faith can firmly grasp these promises as their own; they can realize that as their justification and call were not of themselves, but of the Lord, so all their course of sacrifice, in harmony with that call, is under divine supervision and care, and sure to work out blessings; and that to whatever extent they shall work out earthly hardships, trials and sufferings, God will proportionately make them to work out a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory in the Kingdom.—2 Cor. 4:17.

With this peace of God and confidence in his leading and care, they can apply to themselves the prophetic statement, "All the steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord, and he [the righteous man] delighteth in his way." (Psa. 37:23.) They can delight in this way, be it ever so thorny and narrow and rugged, because of their confidence in God's love and wisdom, and that he who began a good work in them is thus completing it and blessing them with experiences which divine wisdom sees will be to their profit eventually. Thus the Lord's blessing is upon this class; and they realize indeed that, "The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich." How rich it makes their hearts in the present time—rich in noble sentiments, rich in faith, rich in love, rich in good works to all men as they have opportunity, especially toward the household of faith; and very rich in God's blessing and under his providential care, which, if rightly accepted, will ultimately make these members of the Royal Priesthood heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, in an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. —1 Pet. 1:4. Z. '01:52-56.

A Full Submission of Our Wills to the Lord's Will!

DO YOU answer,—Why, that is what I have been wanting to do ever since I consecrated myself to the Lord; but I have not attained it;—What more can I do? As yes! so it has been with all fully consecrated children of God; for a long time we all made the same mistake of **wanting to** fully submit our wills to God's will, instead of **doing so.**

A good **wish** is an excellent thing, very important indeed, but if the wish does not lead to performance it is valueless. Some people never get beyond the wishing point in any of life's affairs: they wish to rise at a certain hour in the morning, or to attend to certain recognized duties, or render some service, or speak some word of kindness or encouragement in the name of the Lord,—but they never fulfil their good wishes in deeds. The good wish should be followed by a good and determined **will**, which is sure to be favored by a way in matters fully in accord with the divine will. . . .

Even after we have adopted the Lord's will (as instead of our own natural preferences) and made it ours; and after we have resolved to **do** the Lord's will:—still we are in danger and need to walk carefully, lest we misapprehend the Lord's will and adopt the will and plans of fellow men or of a church, instead of the Lord's will. Consequently, without despising human aid in the ascertainment of the Lord's will, while remembering that God still, as in times past, makes use of human agencies in instructing his people, it must not be forgotten that Satan also uses human agents to mislead and to deceive, and that God permits this, in order to teach us that he is the real Teacher. Hence he puts his Word, the Bible, as the test by which his people are to distinguish between true and false teachers, saying, "If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

Coming to the Scriptures to ascertain **God's will,** we find that the great **work** which God asks of us is not work for others, but work in ourselves: subduing, conquering, ruling self. "This is the **will of God [concerning you]**, even your sanctification!" (1 Thes. 4:3.) Everything else, therefore,—our service of the household of faith, and our doing good unto all men, by home and foreign missions, etc., etc., is subservient to this most important work within. For, as the Apostle by inspiration declares, Tho we should preach the gospel eloquently to others, and tho we should give all our goods to feed the poor, or become martyrs for a good cause, **without love,** the spirit of Christ and the Father developed in us as the ruling principle of life, we would be **nothing,** from the divine standpoint.

On the contrary, if we be sanctified to God by the truth—if our wills be dead, and the Lord's will be fully accepted as ours, in thought, word and act, we have attained the will of God and will win the prize as "overcomers"—even if, opportunities being denied us, we never preached, never gave to the poor and never suffered as martyrs for the truth's sake. Let us all note well this point,—"This is the will of God [concerning you], even **your sanctification.**" Let nothing becloud or obscure this truth;—neither other truths nor errors. Let it dominate our course in life, and then, if God's will is really our will, we have a clearly marked pathway before us, which is very important.—Z. '99:4.

The Christian's Joy

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."—Psa. 16:11.

WHEN we consider how much is said in the Scriptures about joy and rejoicing among God's people, we are deeply impressed with the thought that our heavenly Father is very solicitous for the happiness of his children, even in the present life. The worldly minded cannot see this, they look upon the lot of God's children as a hard and joyless one, and upon God as a hard Master, without concern for the happiness of his children. This, however, is only because the natural man cannot receive the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. But the spiritual-minded have meat to eat that the world knows not of: and their hearts rejoice, and their joy no man taketh from them.

How strange it seems! says the world. Why, there was Paul, a man of great talent and opportunity who might have been somebody in the world: he wasted his talents, was a poor man all his days, homeless, friendless, knocked about and persecuted, a sort of religious fanatic. But Paul, viewing the matter from the standpoint of his spiritual discernment, said, "I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation" (2 Cor. 7:4); for he was one of that anointed body who, like his Lord and Head, could say, "I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad."—Acts 2:25, 26.

So the Psalmist bids all the anointed body rejoice, saying, "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright." (Psa. 33:1.) And Isaiah, speaking for the same class, says, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels."—Isa. 61:10.

This blessed joy, which so wonderfully lifts the soul above all the vicissitudes of the present life, is, as the prophet expresses it, joy in the Lord, not a joy in earthly possessions, or earthly hopes or ambitions. These earthly things are all so transitory and so changeable that a single blast of adversity may sweep them all from us; but not so is it with those whose hearts are centered in God and to whom he has shown the path of life. These have learned to estimate the things of this present life according to their true values; they see that all of its joys are both transient and unsatisfactory and that the only real value in it is in the opportunities it affords for experience and discipline and education in the things of God and for hearing the call of God. In thus making the proper use of the present life—walking in the path of life which God shows us through his Word—we have the present joys of hope and faith in the things unseen, but sure and eternal; knowing also that by and by in the immediate presence of God we shall have fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore at his right hand—the chief place of favor.

But while the fulness of joy in its widest sense is reserved for that blessed time when we shall be like the Lord and see him as he is (1 John 3:1, 2) and be in his presence and at his right hand (in his chief favor), there is a fulness of joy in the presence and favor of God which is the privilege of every Christian now. Our capacity for joy now is not what it will be by and by, but it is possible now to have our little earthen vessels as full as they can hold of the joy of the Lord. And day by day it is our privilege to realize the presence and favor of God, if, by walking in the path of life, the path of obedience and loving service, we draw near to God. "If a man love me," said our Lord Jesus, "he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."—John 14:23.

In such company as this, can any Christian fail utterly to realize some measure of joy in the Lord? No, if his faith grasps the promise and holds it, the realization of joy in the Lord is sure to follow, and the more firmly his faith lays hold upon the promise the more will he realize its fulfilment, and the more fully will his joys abound; for in the presence of the Lord is fulness of joy, no matter what may be the conditions and circumstances.

In the blessed realization of this experience and the assurance of faith which it gave, in the midst of all his labors, Paul exclaimed, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 8:33-39.

It was this strong persuasion, this confident faith, of the Apostle that gave him such joy in the midst of all his tribulations. His faith laid hold upon the promises of God with a strong and steady grasp, and love and gratitude impelled him to prompt obedience to the will of God and ardent zeal in his service; and evidently the Lord's promise was fulfilled to him in the abiding presence of Father and Son with him at all times and under all circumstances.

This blessed privilege is ours also, if by faith we enter fully into the Lord's will and favor. And with a blessed realization of the abiding presence of our heavenly Father, and our Lord Jesus at all times, and of their love and favor, and a faith that lays hold of all the exceeding great and precious promises of God, what soul may not rejoice and be glad, even in the midst of deep sorrow or great tribulation? In the Lord's presence, no matter where we are, is fulness of joy. Let us cultivate the Lord's acquaintance more, drawing near to him in prayer, in the study of his precious Word, in meditation upon all his goodness, his providential care, the marked manifestations of his grace in our own individual experiences, and his precious promises which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Thus "draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8), he will manifest himself to you and take up his abode with you.

It is indeed the will of God that all his children should be happy in him, that they should be always rejoicing; and **if any one lacks this blessing, he is living below his privileges.** Beloved, let us not be contented to live beneath our privileges. Let us appreciate the favor of God to the extent of seeking for it more and more diligently, remembering the exhortation, "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." All the riches of divine favor are ours if in faith and humility we claim them and place ourselves in position to receive them as directed through the Word of God. "Ask and receive, that your joy may be full." And **your joy can no man take from you, so long as you abide in Him who is our life, our joy, our rest, our hope.**

"Why should the children of the King
Go mourning all the day?"

"Children of the Heavenly King,
As we journey let us sing!"—Z. '96:53, 54.

Living By Every Word Out of the Mouth of God

"Man shall not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—Matt. 4:4.

BREAD is a general name for food: for that which satisfies the cravings of hunger; for that which builds up and strengthens; for that which enables the continuance of life. It was appropriate, therefore, that the Lord should use bread as a symbol, or figure of that heavenly sustenance which God has arranged should now upbuild and strengthen his people, and eventually, by the first resurrection, impart to them life everlasting. Divine truth is represented as being such spiritual food; and our Lord himself, because in the divine plan he is the channel of the truth,—"the way, the truth, the life,"—is spoken of as being also "the bread of life" for his people. We are to eat, or partake of the life-giving qualities which he freely gives us in himself, if we would reach the goal of our hope—eternal life.

Our text is our Lord's reply to the Tempter when he was in the wilderness fasting and hungry. The Tempter had suggested the use of the powers which Jesus had received a few days previous when, at his baptism in Jordan, he received the holy spirit, and with it the gifts and powers which subsequently enabled him not only to heal the sick, but to turn water into wine and to feed a multitude by increasing the two barley loaves and the two small fishes. The Adversary's proposition was that the Lord should use this power for the gratification of his own appetite. He said, "Command that these stones be made bread."

However pleased the Lord was to have these divine powers communicated through the holy spirit he had received, however glad he was, at appropriate times, to perform the miracles incidental to his ministry, he knew that the powers were not given him for any selfish use, for any self-gratification; and, therefore, he declined the suggestion and his reply is our text. In passing, we note that there is a lesson here worthy of the attention of all God's people; that spiritual and divine things are not to be used in a mercenary or selfish manner. So far as they can discern matters, the Lord's people are to keep separate and distinct their own personal preferences, desires and appetites, from the heavenly and spiritual things; and not use the latter for the services of the flesh, however pure and good the fleshly desires may be.

Our Lords words accept the suggestion that bread, food, is necessary to human sustenance under present conditions; but they carry the thought further—they draw our attention to a higher life than the present one. The present life is not really life, but death: the world is under divine sentence of death; and only those who have come by faith into relationship with God have "passed from death unto life;" as our Master on another occasion said, "He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son shall not see life." And again he said to one who was thinking of becoming his servant, his follower—"Let the dead bury their dead, follow thou me."

From this standpoint we see that man cannot live by bread alone. He has the divine sentence against him, "dying thou shalt die"; and he can find no kind of bread, no kind of food, that will produce life in the full and complete sense of that word—that will swallow up death in life. He must look for another kind of "bread of life" than any earthly food; he must have another kind of "water of life" than any earthly drink. It is this heavenly food or supply to which our Lord refers; saying, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

But how is it possible for us to live by the words that proceed out of the mouth of God? What did Jesus mean? How can God's words give us life?

He meant that all hopes of eternal life depend upon God—upon the divine plan and its promises. Looking into these promises we can see distinctly that the divine plan, dating from before the foundation of the world, is that all of God's creatures, created in his likeness and abiding in faith, love and obedience, in harmony with him, shall have life everlasting. This is God's general word upon the subject; namely, that obedience is the condition of life everlasting. This is, undoubtedly, what our Lord had in mind in using the words of our text: he may also have had the thought that he had come into the world upon a special mission, to do the Father's will, and that his understanding from the beginning was that his perfect obedience to the divine will would insure him glory, honor, immortality with the Father, eventually; but that any disobedience would mean the forfeiture of divine favor, and would involve the sentence of disobedience; namely, death.

Our Lord's prompt decision, therefore, was that to disobey the Father's will, and thus to secure bread for the sustenance of his body, would be a great mistake; that food thus secured could sustain life for but a little while;—that his better plan would be to trust in the Word of God, the divine **promise** that those who love and serve and obey him shall ultimately come off conquerors and more, and have eternal life with God. And this, our Master's conclusion, is full of instruction for us who are his disciples, seeking to walk in his footsteps. We are to learn the lesson that a man's life consists not in the abundance of things which he possesseth—food and raiment, but that his life in the fullest, grandest, highest sense, is dependent upon his complete submission to the divine will—his careful attention to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

The words of God's mouth to us are not exactly the same as to our Lord Jesus and to the holy angels;—because we are by nature children of wrath even as others—sinners: we must, therefore, be addressed from a true standpoint to begin with. Thus it is that we hear the words of God's mouth in different languages at different times in our experiences. . . .

The Voice of God "Speaking Peace by Jesus Christ"

The message of **peace** is that God has already provided the ransom price for sinners;—that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man"; that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and rose again for our justification." This **word** from God's mouth informs us that through this transaction, which is entirely his own without our instigation or aid, "He may be just and yet the justifier of those who believe in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26.) Oh, what joy, what hope of life comes into our hearts as we hear this **word** which proceeded out of the mouth of God! We exclaim with the Apostle, "If God be for us who can be against us?" If God so loved us while we were yet sinners, much more does he love us since we are seeking him, desirous of returning to fellowship with him, and since we accept the provision of his grace in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thus to all who accept the atonement which is in Christ Jesus, through his blood, God indeed speaks words of grace and peace—forgiveness, reconciliation, mercy, love, kindness. . . .

"Ye Have Need of Patience."

God's Word or message of patience is, "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (Jas. 1:4.) How necessary to our perfection is this divine counsel—this Word which proceeds from the mouth of God! We might imagine that we had received sufficient testing and proving to indicate our loyalty to the Lord, to the principles of righteousness, long before we had been sufficiently proved according to the Lord's standards in the testing of character. He therefore graciously explains to us how necessary patience will be, that we should not think it strange concerning the fiery trials which must test us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us. (1 Pet. 4:12.) On the contrary he points out to us as we grow in grace and in knowledge and in ability to comprehend—that the glory, honor and immortality to which he has invited the Church of this Gospel age, is so high, so grand a position, that those who would share those honors must expect, necessarily, to be severely tried and tested that their absolute loyalty to the Lord and to the principles of his righteousness—justice, truth, love— shall be beyond question. Our characters must become crystalized along these lines, firm as adamant, before we shall be ready to be received as the "overcomers" who shall inherit all things, and share the kingdom and glory with the Captain of our salvation. He points out to us, further, that if it was necessary for the Captain of our salvation to be tempted and tried, tested and proved, much more reasonable is it that we who were children of wrath, and justified only through his grace, should be thoroughly proven as respects our loyalty.

Words of Consolation From the Mouth of God

We might well be exercised with the strictness of the divine requirements as respects this overcoming class, and might say to ourselves, Others may attain to such glories and blessings; but we are too weak in the flesh through the fall and cannot hope to come off victors—cannot hope to stand the trials and tests which the Lord would impose. And here the Lord speaks again, a gracious **word** of comfort, consolation and encouragement, informing us that the perfection he is expecting is not a perfection in the flesh and of the flesh which is weak and imperfect, but a perfection of the heart, of the will, of the mind, of the intention. He informs us that he is not judging us as human beings according to the flesh, but as new creatures according to the mind, the new will. He informs us that although he will expect the new mind to do its very best in the matter of controlling the flesh and bringing it into subjection, yet, nevertheless, he knows that the flesh being imperfect, perfection according to the flesh is an impossibility to any of the fallen race: and that, therefore, his arrangement through Christ is, that the imperfections of the flesh which are not assented to by our wills are not counted as ours. They are covered by the merit of Christ's sacrifice, and are ignored in the Heavenly Father's reckoning with us. He assures us that we are to be judged according to the spirit (will, intent) and not according to the flesh.

What comfort and consolation are in these assurances! These are wonderful words of life, indeed! They inspire us with hope. If God will accept perfect heart-intentions, as instead of the absolute perfection of the flesh,—then indeed we have hope of attaining to the standard which he has marked for us,—the standard of perfection. We can be perfect in intention, in will, or, as the Master expresses it, "pure in heart," even though we cannot be perfect in the flesh. We hear through the Apostle the **word** proceeding out of the mouth of God to this effect. "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." (Rom. 8:4.) We can walk after the spirit, though, so far as our mortal bodies are concerned, we cannot walk up to the spirit's requirements. Our minds can walk up to the spirit, our intentions can be perfect; and this is what our Heavenly Father seeks in us, perfection of intention.

The Word of Resurrection

A further word from the mouth of God assures us that he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust—under sentence of death. "Dust thou are and unto dust shalt thou return"—weak, imperfect, dying; and that it is not his purpose that we shall always be in conflict with ourselves—perfect will against imperfect body,—that he has provided that in the resurrection we shall have new, perfect bodies in full accord with our new minds. He assures us that he is able and willing to do all this, and that he proposes to give to his "elect," bodies of a still higher order than the human—that he will give us spiritual bodies. They shall have a part in the first resurrection, and thenceforth be able to do the Father's will perfectly in every respect—as they now show themselves desirous of doing his will so far as they are able. Oh, gracious provisions! O wonderful words of compassion, inspiring us to wonderful hopes of eternal life and glory! It will be to such as thus overcome in spirit, in faith (1 John 5:4), that the Lord will give the final word of his mouth—"Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

Every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God—every admonition, every encouragement, every promise, is necessary. The eating of natural food could not bring this life-eternal, nor its attendant glories; but the eating and appropriating of these words from the mouth of God can bring to us all these blessings which we crave. Let us then, more and more, as the disciples, pupils, of the Lord Jesus, keep in memory and act upon the suggestion of the words of this text. "Man shall not live by bread alone: but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—Z. '02:245-248.

"Consider"

"Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding."—2 Tim. 2:7.

CONSIDER—reflect, think, study, ponder. Whatever may be said of the heathen religions and of churchianity in respect to their requiring little thought, little study, this is not the case with the religion of the Bible. It is not a religion of credulity—"shut your eyes and open your mouth," and swallow what is put therein. True, it is a religion of faith;—but a faith based upon reasonable evidences—a knowledge of God, whose plan and character it reveals. . . .

Let us note how the Scriptures urge God's people to **consider.** They are to consider the natural things of the Lord's provision, as they touch with these in the course of human life, and are to read in them certain great lessons respecting the Creator. For instance, notice our Lord's statements, "**Consider** the lilies of the field." (Matt. 6:28.) "**Consider** the ravens." (Luke 12:24.) Our Lord calls attention to how such simple things in nature should be studied, be **considered.** The lessons to be learned in connection with all the affairs of life will be helpful to such as approach the study from the right standpoint, of faith in the Creator, and a realization that he is necessarily the embodiment and representative of the very highest and very noblest qualities of which the human mind could conceive;—that he is perfect in Justice, perfect in Wisdom, perfect in Power, perfect in Love. From this standpoint of faith we can learn a great lesson from **considering** the lilies. Their beauty teaches us that the Lord has a keen appreciation of the beautiful, and the fact that it comes to them without their toiling or spinning, teaches us that God is abundantly able to produce the beautiful without our aid, and that if necessary he could likewise clothe us miraculously. It teaches, further, that since he has not thus made provision for our necessities, it must be because he has seen (as the Word declares) that the experiences of life in the development of the resources of nature, in providing for our own needs, will be helpful to us.

As we consider the ravens and sparrows, and note how the Lord has made provision for their necessities without barns for the winter time, it teaches us that his power and wisdom could similarly, if necessary, provide for the necessities of his people, miraculously or otherwise; and that in leaving humanity more subject to the vicissitudes of life than the little birds, the Lord doubtless intends thus to instruct mankind and to develop its reasoning faculties in respect to life's interests and necessary provisions, and in a manner that will be more helpful to him, better calculated for his development than would such a provision as is made for the dumb brutes. Faith can learn in all the affairs of life lessons of divine wisdom, and may assure itself reasonably, in harmony with the Lord's suggestion, that human beings are much more valuable than many sparrows, many ravens, many lilies, in God's sight; and that we may therefore more reasonably trust to his goodness and his interest in human affairs.

Thus **considering,** and looking through the little affairs of life, and noting the divine character as revealed in them, the mind is prepared for the still greater revelation of God's goodness set forth in his Word, which assures of his sympathy for humanity in its fallen condition, and of his willingness to assist in man's recovery from sin and death along lines in harmony with justice and love. **Considering,** from this standpoint, the love of God revealed through his

Son Jesus commends itself at once to our hearts as being in full accord with what we find to be his general character—justice, wisdom, love. The heart that thus **considers** makes progress, grows in grace, in knowledge, in love. The heart that fails to **consider** the little things fails to be able to appreciate the larger things, and thus is hindered from a proper consideration of God and from a proper appreciation of his plan, and thus from a proper appreciation of his character.

It is David, the prophet, who exclaims, "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers!" (Psalm 8:3.) To the Prophet, whose mind was rightly directed and who **considered** these things, "day unto day uttered speech and night unto night showed forth knowledge;" and as a result King David—before the Gospel dispensation, before the giving of the holy Spirit of adoption, before the coming of the inestimable blessings which are ours today—gained a large appreciation of his Creator, which became to him an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. The large conception of the divine character gained from the consideration of the divine work, even as seen in nature, brought the prophet-king near to God, in humility, in veneration, in love.

But if such a consideration of the heavens and the things of nature are profitable and helpful, how much more profitable is the consideration of the still higher things revealed to the Gospel Church through the holy Spirit since Pentecost. The Apostle Paul calls our attention in this direction, saying, "**Consider** the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (Heb. 3:1.) But how few of those who read the Scriptures have ever followed the Apostle's suggestion? how few have ever **considered** Jesus from the standpoint suggested,—as the Church's Apostle or special teacher sent of God to specially guide and instruct the Church, and as the Church's High Priest to whom the faithful occupy the relationship of under priests? Had more **consideration** been given by the Lord's people to these matters, a larger number would undoubtedly be much farther advanced than they are today, in the knowledge and love of God. . . .

Again the Apostle speaks of the high spiritual things which we are to **consider**, after we have taken our first lessons in considering the natural things, the lilies, ravens, heavens, etc., saying, "**Consider** him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Heb. 12:3.) Alas, how many of God's true children become weary and faint in their minds, and are in danger of losing the chief prize because they have failed to think upon, to study out, to comprehend, to **consider** the Lord and what he faithfully endured of opposition. As they would **consider** his perfection and how, as represented in him, the light shined in darkness and was not appreciated, so they would expect that the light shining from them would not be appreciated either.—(John 1:5.) As they would **consider** how the Lord suffered in every sense unjustly and for righteousnes sake, and then would reflect that their own conduct, even though well meant, is imperfect, it would strengthen them to endure hardness as good soldiers, and not to be weary in well doing, and not to faint under opposition. It would enable them to realize what the Scriptures plainly declare, namely, that experiences and testings are necessary to the Lord's people and if rightly received these all work out everlasting blessings.

Such consideration of the Lord and what he endured and the reflection and realization of their own imperfections while seeking to walk in his footsteps, would tend to bring them not only to appreciation of the Lord's sympathy for his people and his grace toward them in covering from his sight their unwilling imperfections, but additionally, this consideration would lead to sympathy for their fellows in the narrow way. The Apostle intimates the propriety of such reflections, saying, "Consider one another to provoke [incite, inspire] unto love and good works." —(Heb. 10:24.) Oh, how much the Lord's people need to remember this injunction, if they would have proper forbearance and love one toward another,—to consider one another's sacrifice, to think of each other's imperfections, peculiarities or good qualities, as the case may be. With the Christian brother consideration always means to think kindly, charitably, even of the blemishes which love cannot hide. **These blemishes are not to be considered lest they sour our hearts** and arouse in our minds an opposition to one another; nor are they to be considered as an excuse for gossip or slander. The Apostle explains that **we are to consider one another with a view to ascertaining how we can be most helpful to each other in the narrow way, most edifying, most strengthening, most inspiring.**

Looking back to our text we find that the Apostle has united in it two thoughts: first, the necessity of considering; second, the necessity of having divine assistance in order to the reaching of a right understanding. "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding."—Z. '04:36-39.

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The Christian has before him the only proper, legitimate and worthy ambition possible at the present time; nor does the average or nominal Christian have these correct ambitions, but rather only such Christians as are taught of God, such as hear and heed the Word of the Lord. Before these are set the most noble, lofty ambitions; they are invited into the society, friendship and fellowship of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. They are invited to become his companions, his brethren, coworkers together with him in the great work he is now accomplishing, and also to be joint-heirs with him in the great work of the Millennial Kingdom which he is shortly to inaugurate. Could there be a higher ambition than this set before mortal man? Surely not. Moreover, it is an ambition which tends to develop all the higher qualities of mind and character, for the terms and conditions of this fellowship are based upon purity of heart, devotion to the Lord, etc., so that he that hath these ambitions and hopes in him purifieth himself even as he is pure with whom he has become associated. Let us have these true ambitions before us, that they may crowd out and trample down the inferior ambitions of earth and sensuality, that lead to sin, groveling and devilishness.—Z. '00:157.

The River of Salvation

Ezek. 47 : 1-12.

"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.
—Rev. 22:17.

MANY OF the particulars connected with this vision described by Ezekiel are so circumstantial to the land of Israel as to give considerable ground for belief that it will have a literal fulfilment in the future; and in connection with the vision is shown a new division of the land of Canaan amongst the twelve tribes. But whatever literal fulfilment the vision may have, we may be positive that it is to have a grand fulfilment as a symbol, for the life-giving river here brought to our attention is undoubtedly the same one described six hundred years later, by John the Revelator, and referred to in our Text.

Referring to the description of the river starting from the Temple, Prof. Davidson says, "The natural fact upon which this conception rests is this, that there was a fountain connected with the Temple hill, the waters of which fell into the valley east of the city, and made their way toward the sea." So far as we may know, this fountain never was of any considerable size, and never would be, without more or less of a miracle, for at present the entire country is arid, except in the rainy season. From this fountain the Valley of Kedron leads directly to the Dead Sea, which, as is well known, has no connection with the ocean waters, either on the surface or subterraneously, and is 1,308 feet below the sea level.

However, there are evidences that at one time the Dead Sea was on a level with the ocean, and if by earthquake or otherwise the connection between it and the ocean waters were re-established it would rise to its old level, which would make of it an inland sea 150 miles long, and five to ten miles wide. And such a filling up of its basin would have a marked effect, not only upon the humidity of the atmosphere in its vicinity, but also upon the water-springs of lower Palestine. The natural result would be, not only that the Dead Sea would be sweetened of its brackishness, and become like the ocean, but also that the springs in the vicinity of Jerusalem would be greatly enlarged so as to produce some such river as this described in the prophecy, and these springs in that now parched desert country would cause its vegetation to prosper. It is worthy of note that this valley now occupied by the Dead Sea was once most fertile,—before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. We read, "Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah,—even as the garden of the Lord." (Gen. 13 : 10.) And the restitution of this country to a Paradisaic condition is what the Prophet Ezekiel describes, if his language be given a literal interpretation at all—and this it seems to demand, as well as the symbolic interpretation. . . .

Returning to the Prophet's vision, we note that the waters flowed out from the house of the Lord, from the Temple, and that wherever they went they brought vitality and refreshment, healing, restitution, life—even to the Dead Sea. This to our understanding is a picture of the grace of God during the Millennial age, when from the Church, the house of God, the Temple, "the habitation of God through the spirit" (Eph. 2 : 22), the stream of the water of life, healing, restoring, rejuvenating, shall flow to all the families of the earth, whose condition is represented by the wilderness eastward of Jerusalem. The result will be the blessing and restitution of all the living families of the earth willing to receive the blessing. And it means more: for the Dead Sea fitly represents the vast multitude of mankind which has gone into the tomb, and the water of life shall reach even these, and bring to them also awakening from death, opportunities of restitution.

That the fulfilment of this vision could not be a thing of the past nor of the present is evident when we remember that the house of God, the Temple, the Church, is not yet completed—that the present is the time in which the Lord is fitting the "living stones" for the Temple. The Gospel age was typified in the building of Solomon's Temple, by the period of preparation of the materials, after which we are informed that the whole house came together quickly, each stone fitting to its place and each timber to its position, and that without the sound of a hammer or any tool of iron. So with the "living stones," as the Apostle Peter calls the Church. (1 Pet. 2 : 5.) These are "builded together for a habitation of God through the spirit," and the building will not be completed until the last of these fitted and polished stones is laid in its position. Then the glory of the Lord shall fill the house,—the Church will be glorified. Then will have come the time represented in this vision, when the stream of the water of life, truth and grace shall flow from the glorified Temple.

As there is no completed Temple yet, so there is no river yet; but when the Temple is completed, when the various members of the body of Christ are brought together and united in glory, honor and immortality to the Head of the Church, then from this united and glorified company of God's elect shall flow the symbolic river of water of life, clear as crystal. In each member of this Temple class, in each of these "living stones," already is a well-spring of truth and grace, and when these many well-springs shall have thus been united to the great Head and Fountain, the result naturally will be a stream of good proportions,—a river. To this coming time of blessing of the world our Lord refers, saying, "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (Jno. 7 : 38.) In order to be of this class in whom the great river of water of life will take its start, it is necessary, first, that the believer shall come unto Jesus and drink of him, the great Fountain of life; and it will be as a result of this partaking of the great Fountain that all of the elect Church shall become minor well-springs and fountains in due time.

Turning to the description of this same symbolic river, furnished us in the Book of Revelation (chapter 22), we find abundant evidences that it does not refer to the present time, but to the Millennial age. For instance, it is symbolically pictured as having trees of life on either side, whose leaves are for the healing of the **nations**—not for the healing of the **Church,** which at this time is the glorified Temple from which this river proceeds—and this healing of the nations signifies, as plainly as a symbolic picture could indicate it, **restitution,**—the healing of the woes of the groaning creation, its sin and sickness and imperfection. . . .

This same glorious City (Kingdom), the glorified New Jerusalem, the Church, and the river of the water of life gushing forth therefrom, are brought to our attention in Psalm 46: "There is a river, the rivulets of which shall spring from the City of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved. God shall help her early in the morning." The connections here also show that these rivulets are not to be expected to flow out as a river, until the Millennial morning, and the context refers particularly to the time of trouble with which the present age shall end and the Millennial morning shall be introduced.

Those whom the Lord our God has called, and who, in obedience to that call, have come to Jesus, the Fountain of life, and through him have tasted that the Lord is gracious, should let the Word and grace of God dwell in them richly and abound, making them neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord and in his service. It is for these to seek enlargement in the grace of God, that as well-springs they may be deeper and wider and more and more filled to overflowing with that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. It is for these to see it, each for himself, that he has not received the grace of God in vain, and that this well-spring does not become choked with the rubbish of this present evil world, its aims, its hopes, its ambitions, its pride, its desires of the flesh:—that thus, under divine providence and supervision, we may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and have fellowship with our glorious Lord and Head in the sending forth of the river of salvation unto the ends of the earth in "due time;"—the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, to whosoever will of all the families of the earth.—2 Pet. 1:4-11; 2 Cor. 6:1; Col. 1:12; 1 John 1:3; Z. '99: 196-198.

Taking Heed to Our Hearts

"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice."—Ephesians 4:31.

THIS list of **dis-graces** seems to have a connection or relationship, the one to the other, and usually, it is presumed, the relationship is inbred. The Apostle speaks in one place of a danger of having a root of bitterness spring up, and thereby many being defiled. In this case he seems to indicate how defilement grows from such a root of bitterness, and what would be the evil results from permitting such a root to grow. Bitterness is frequently represented by brackish water—not pure water, but alkaline, unpalatable. In the text under consideration it seems to represent first the heart condition. And so, if the fountain become defiled or impure, the thoughts, words and actions will be impure—brackish.

The thought seems to be to take heed to our hearts—not to have an ungenerous sentiment. And if such intrude, it must be immediately repulsed, just as we would resist anything contagious. And so we must resist everything of bitterness of spirit, not only anger toward a person, but even a disposition to criticize, or find fault with anything he would do. This is the place to watch our hearts. As soon as the bitter spirit has found place, all the faults of that person will be exaggerated and all his good qualities minimized. Then would come an angry feeling, a bitter spirit of opposition. The angry feeling persisted in would immediately lead to hatred for the individual.

The person would not merely feel indignant, but the feeling would grow to a positive dislike. It is the growing of a feeling of bitterness which will develop into a plant which will do much harm. Next would come the disposition to speak evil of that person. Naturally that which people do not love is that which they hate. And then comes the condition of malice, a resentful feeling—not only willingness to speak evil, but a willingness to do them some injury, and to feel glad if some injury befalls them. And thus the evil goes on.

The influence of all this is to stifle the New Creature, to mortify the New Creature. As every victory of the spirit over the flesh is a victory of the New Creature over the old creature, so any victory of the flesh over the spirit is a victory of the old creature over the New Creature.

The Scriptures Are a Mirror

To get a proper view of ourselves seems to be a most necessary thing to any reformation movement in connection with ourselves. It was not until we saw ourselves without strength that we appreciated the great offer of God to draw us to himself, reconciling us through the merit of his Son. The Scriptures are a mirror. So if we are living in the right attitude it will be proper to take a look into the mirror every day and see what manner of persons we are. Our Lord's prayer is, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

We are to be in a right attitude of mind. The very suggestion, Is there anyone against whom I have trespassed, or who has trespassed against me, ought to be enough, so that if we find any trace of unforgiveness we should eradicate it, put it away. The roots of bitterness would not only be put away, but hindered, if the very first sign of such a feeling were heeded and dealt with. If any one found that he had gotten into such a condition of heart, he should think. How does the Lord view such a condition; how impossible it would be for him to have love for one who has such a disposition? Anyone who really loves God would be so shocked at the picture he would thus get in the looking-glass of God's Word that he would immediately want to ask forgiveness and go forthwith to the one he had wronged. If the wrong had proceeded to anger, evil-speaking, then this should all be overcome, nullified. If the matter had gone so far, and no one else knew it, then this would be the end of the matter.

But since anger and bitterness are entirely out of order, the flesh should be humiliated in some manner. For instance, on going to the person one had been acting bitterly against, the latter should be told that he had thought bitterly of him, but that he should have left the matter in God's hand. It is our belief that some make a mistake in not giving themselves a correction in righteousness. "Well," they may say, "I will stop it and not do this thing again." When that is done, it is our opinion that the flesh is being fostered and encouraged. A special blessing comes to those who chasten themselves, judge themselves. As the Apostle says, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord."—1 Cor. 11:31.

In this connection we are reminded of the story that is told of a man who was driving along the road and saw a beggar and then said, "I will give this man twenty-five cents; it is Christmas morning." Then he thought, "I won't: I will give him a penny." As this thought came he thought how mean he was. He thought that he should have given him the quarter, should have allowed the generous impulse to have sway. Then he said to himself, "Give that man a dollar—make it four-fold." So he gave him a dollar, and was out seventy-five cents.

Using that same principle or illustration, we believe that it is most advisable for the Lord's people to judge themselves—not after the manner of our Catholic friends, who would say, "Now go and pray so many hours," or, "Wear something uncomfortable," or "Take a whip and lash your back." But it would be wise to judge ourselves in a more rational way. A certain kind of penance tends to produce fruit of an acceptable kind.—Z. '11:45.

The Love to be Desired

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."—1 Peter 1:22.

THE word "souls" in this text stands, as usual, for the **being**, and not merely for the **physical** being, which is included. The purifying, therefore, refers to a thorough cleansing of the heart (the mind, the will, the actuating intentions, or motives), as the effect of such purification will be manifest in the outward life and conduct.

We purify our souls—that is, our souls are purified (have been purified if we are saints)—by obedience to the Truth through the spirit; that is to imply that it is necessary for us to know the Truth; not necessarily that we know all truth, but necessary for us to know the great truth on this subject—the truth that God condemned sin; to know the truth that the whole world of mankind came under this condemnation; to know the truth that God has provided a way of escape from the condemnation that is upon the world; to know the truth that there is but one particular way in which any can avail themselves of this Divine provision, namely, that of being justified by faith in Christ, and taking up the cross and following in his footsteps. When we presented ourselves in spirit and in truth, through faith, our sins were forgiven; we were accepted as New Creatures in Christ; our souls were purified; we were started in a new career.

In our text the Apostle proceeds to say that, having had this glorious transformation of character, through the knowledge of and obedience to the spirit of the Truth, we have learned to love the brethren with an "unfeigned love," a love that is genuine, without pretence—not merely an outward profession, to have a smile upon the face or to give a cordial grasp of the hand, but that through this spirit we have recognized that all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to the dear Redeemer, and are seeking to follow his leadings, are "brethren," regardless of race or color or education or poverty or homeliness. We have reached the point where our hearts are so full of the Spirit of the Master that we can truthfully say we love all the brethren with a love which is sincere and not at all feigned.

Now, having gotten along thus far in the good way, the Apostle shows us that there is yet an advance step of love, and states what next we must do in order to keep our hearts pure: "See that **ye** love one another with a pure heart **fervently**." We must not only regard them as brethren and give them "unfeigned love," but should recognize the principle underlying **our** relationship to the Lord and **their** relationship to the Lord; how they, like ourselves, are New Creatures in Christ; and this should give us great sympathy and a desire to do everything we can to encourage them, to help them.

Disinterested Love—Strong and Intense

This love is different from the other love—brotherly love. It is disinterested love; so warm, so intense, that we should be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren. This love is the kind exemplified in our Heavenly Father. While we were yet sinners he loved us. So the love of Jesus is unselfish, pure, benevolent: a love which undertakes to do good for us for our own sakes, not from a hope of getting anything from us.

The Apostle proceeds to say that we should not only have this love, but that we should have it with fervency; warmth, ardor; not with a semi-indifference, but with a real interest in each other's welfare. Our love should go out to these as we see any lack in them that we could supply—rendering assistance of any kind; using always, of course, discretion, for love learns to be wise, and to take into consideration our motives while we endeavor to do them good. . .

Our Lord Jesus says, "Love one another, as I have loved you." Set this standard before you. Our love for the brethren might, at first, be merely obedience in following this command; but as we follow on, obeying the Divine command, our love increases, our sympathy expands. . . . The Apostle also tells us that he predestinated that all those who should be members of the Body of Christ should be copies of him: copies in having an unfeigned and fervent love.—Z. '11: 57.

"Gird Up the Loins of Your Mind"

Question.—What does this text signify?

Answer.—In olden times when they wore flowing garments, girdles were constantly worn for two purposes: one was to gird up their garments—as, for instance, we sometimes sing, "Gird thy bridal robes around thee." The girdle, therefore, was useful in keeping the garments in their proper place, or position, so that they would not be disordered in appearance, nor cause one to trip and fall. Then, secondly, the girdle was used for its effect upon the loins during active labor. For instance, when one was engaged in a strenuous occupation, such as lifting a heavy weight or carrying a heavy burden or running a race, the muscles of the abdomen would play an important part.

Even in speaking we find the muscles of the abdomen contract, and thus give us the more force and strength of voice. In any kind of manual labor this is found to be the case, and these muscles become comparatively rigid. It is the custom, therefore, among workmen, even today, to wear a belt. When they have particularly severe tasks they take another "hitch" in their belt—that is, they pull it up a few notches more, making it a little tighter around the waist, the object being to support the muscles of the abdomen and to enable them to accomplish more labor with less fatigue: and when they are at rest they slacken the belt.

This seems to be the special thought of the Apostle here—"Gird up the loins of your mind." As there are loins in the body and they have their important part to perform and we strengthen them in time of exercise, or necessity, so with our minds. We who have devoted ourselves to be the Lord's people, to do his service, realize that our minds need to be strengthened. We need to be of good courage. We need to be fortified against all disposition to lassitude.

When we undertake to gird up the loins of our minds it signifies that we have determined upon a course of activity; that **rest and ease are put** aside and that we are now engaging in an important work which we realize requires all the strength that we possess. The Christian has a great task before him, **to lay down his life** in the Lord's service, to accomplish all that he may be able to accomplish in respect to the use of opportunities which the Lord has provided us as his servants, his followers, that we may have a good report to give when he calls us to render our account; that we may say, Thou gavest me two and I have gained, two; or, thou gavest me five talents and I have gained, beside, other five.—Z. '10: 268.

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Let us not deceive ourselves in this matter of having hearts that do not condemn us; let us remember that our covenant was unto sacrifice and not unto self-preservation; that it was a covenant to lay our all upon the altar—time, influence, means of every kind; and that we agreed with our Lord that we would reckon this our reasonable service. Do our hearts condemn us in this matter, or do they justify us? **Do we feel that we are doing all in our power to serve the Lord and his truth and our brethren?** If so, let us rejoice, and let us continue in the same way, patiently hoping for the glorious results promised to the faithful. But if our hearts condemn us, let us not be discouraged; but on the contrary remember that this is a part of the cleansing of the flesh and of the spirit necessary to our preparation for the Kingdom, and let us afresh bind our sacrifices to the altar (Psa. 118: 27), and be more and more zealous in expending our little all in the service of him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood. Thus doing, it will be our privilege day by day to draw nearer and nearer to the "Most Holy," and thus finishing our course with joy we shall have share in the first resurrection, awakening in our Lord's likeness.—2 Cor. 5: 14, 15; Rom. 6: 5; 1 John 3: 2; Psa. 17: 15. Z. '00: 229.

We should realize that, whoever neglects the cultivation of reverence is making his own pathway slippery and dangerous. He who reverences little and is careless is much more likely to stumble, to fall, and be utterly cast down. If even Moses, the "meekest man in all the earth," needed from the Lord as his first instruction a lesson of humility, shall we not suppose that such a lesson is necessary to us? Yea, verily!

Let us honor the Lord in our hearts, in our outward demeanor. Whether we bow to give thanks for our daily bread, whether we bow our knee night and morning in acknowledgement of divine care and providences, or whether we meet with those of like precious faith, let us see to it that **reverence** marks our conduct and our words as well as rules in our hearts, . . . especially when we hearken to his voice in the study of his Word as his people.

—Z. '07 : 141.

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"WHO SHALL STAND?"

Let us remember that we are in a testing season. The Apostles had a similar one during the interim between our Lord's death and Pentecost. After our Lord's resurrection, He appeared to His disciples a few times, and then they did not see Him for many days. Then they became discouraged and said, "There is no use waiting;" "I go fishing," said one. Two others said, "We will go with thee." . . . . This was a testing time for the disciples. So also there is one now. If there is any reason that would lead any to let go of the Lord and His Truth and to cease sacrificing for the Lord's Cause, then it is not merely the love of God in the heart which has prompted interest in the Lord, but something else; probably a hoping that the time was short; the consecration was only for a certain time. If so, now is a good time to let go.

Very probably it is now as it was when Jesus said to His disciples on a certain occasion, "Will ye also go away?" The answer was, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." We would starve spiritually if we went to any other than the Lord's table. We know not anywhere else to go. We shall stay right at the Lord's table. He has been feeding us on the Message of Truth and Life, and we believe that He will put on the table everything necessary for those who are hungering and thirsting for the Truth; and that the Truth on every subject necessary for us will be given as the Lord is pleased to reveal it; for He has promised, "they shall be filled."—Z. '14 : 331-332.

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No one is in the proper attitude of mind to be taught and blessed by the Lord's Word unless he be in the attitude of heart which appreciates the greatness of God and the unworthiness of himself.

—Z. '99 : 247.

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The Lord announces himself as a jealous God who wants all of our affections, all of our confidence, **our entire trust.** He wants that we should be so fully in accord with him that his will shall be supreme in **all** the affairs of life. This is not to be considered selfishness on the part of the Almighty; because this, under his overruling providences, means to his creatures the largest amount of happiness, the largest amount of success in the duties and affairs of the present life, and the largest amount of preparation for the blessings which the Lord has prepared for and promised to those who love him.

—Z. '02 : 204.

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Our Lord tells us why he uttered his teachings in parables;—that it was because the truths he taught were intended only for the Kingdom class, not for the average hearer; and his words are very plain to this effect.—Z. '98 : 78.

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Full consecration of every talent and power and opportunity is Scripturally called death—because the will has died, self-will has gone, and the Lord's will has been accepted in its stead. And since the will is the real **ego**, the real person, the thought is that the old **ego**, will or person has died, and that the new creature, having no will of his own, but being wholly under subjection to the divine will as expressed in Christ, who is the Head of this Body, has come into control. Let us not lose the thought-picture here conveyed. We are not new individuals or persons, for it was individually and personally that we ceased to be when we gave ourselves over by full consecration to the Lord: our new condition is that of members or parts of the larger corporation or body of which our Lord Jesus is the Head. Whoever has a will of his own is properly to be considered an **individual**; but whoever has dropped his own will, and accepted instead of it the will of another, has ceased or figuratively has died as an individual. And this is the picture which the Apostle presents in this and in various other presentations of this subject. For instance, in 1 Corinthians 12, the same writer declares that the entire Christ is one body of many members; but that the will resides not in the members but in the Head. To whatever extent, then, the Lord's people have fully consecrated themselves to him as **members** of the body of Christ, they should be in absolute subjection to the will of God in Christ; and so far as their own wills are concerned they should have none, but in that respect should be **"dead."**

—Z. '99 : 138.

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Only a few more days of willing sacrifice,
  Of patient standing when our work is done;
Soon in His radiant presence we'll rejoice,
  And praise him in our everlasting Home.

Only a few more hours, we know, for some,
  Who in this life have fought a goodly fight;
Henceforth for them remains a glorious crown,
  A rest within the radius of God's light.

—Z. '00 : 134.

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It is not for us to judge the hearts of men; that is beyond our power; but the Lord seems to be using his truth in such a way that it shall become the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts and that, sharper than any two-edged sword, it shall separate, shall discover, shall manifest, who have the spirit of the Lord, and who have not his spirit.—Z. '00 : 302.

Doubtless there were many who considered the martyrdom of Stephen a great calamity to the Church, a great loss of influence; a cutting off of one of the ablest exponents of the gospel. But we are not sure that they took a correct view. Viewed from God's standpoint, quite possibly the testimony which Stephen gave at the close of his life was a most beneficial one; first in its influence upon the believers, in teaching them by precept and example faithfulness, even unto death; and that the Lord's people could die as they lived,—joyful through the faith that is in Christ. His death also probably bore a valuable witness to some of his enemies. Quite possibly the Apostle Paul's first favorable impressions towards Christianity were received through his witness of the courage and zeal of this noble martyr,—whose spirit of Christ he doubtless witnessed in others of the hated "sect, everywhere spoken against."

So with us; we know not which act in life may glorify the Lord most, or whether our living or dying would be most helpful to his cause. We are to leave this in the Lord's hands, and to remember that our course in any event must be one of faithfulness, and that if faithful nothing can by any means harm us, but all things must work together for our good.—Z. '02:59.

◆

In morals, the Lord's people are not to measure themselves by the world's standards; but to remember that it is their duty as exponents of the divine standards to discern sin and meanness and selfishness in the bright light of the spirit of the Truth and to measure up to that as nearly as their imperfect bodies and their environment, with the Lord's grace assisting, will permit.—Z. '02:357.

◆

How evident it is to every observing mind that "the faith once delivered unto the saints" is becoming more and more scarce in Babylon;—and properly it is becoming more and more precious to those who have it to the extent that they are able to "give to them that ask it a reason for the hope that is within them." Hearken to the inspired advice, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong!"—1 Cor. 16:13. Z. '02:148.

◆

According to our faith it will be unto us; he who exercises the faith may go on realizing his acceptance with God; but he who fails to exercise faith will be hindered from approaching God, and using the blessed opportunities put before us in the Gospel, as truly as those who know not of the ransom.—Z. '01:180.

◆

The Apostle says, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Gal. 4:28)—Christ, our Head, and we, his members, are the antitype of him who was called "Laughter," or "Joyous." And do we not have more joy than others, even in this present time? True, we have a full share in the trials and difficulties and sorrows and disappointments, that cause the whole creation to groan and travail in pain together; yet we have what they do not have—"the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts" and enabling us to be "joyful in tribulation also," knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and all the various fruits of the spirit which, when perfected in us, shall bring us to the complete joy and rejoicing of the heavenly Kingdom. And if this name, Joyous, applies to us in such degree in the present time, what shall we say of the glorious future, when joined to our Master in the glories of His Kingdom we shall cause the knowledge and blessing of the Lord to fill the whole earth, and bring laughter and joy to a world of mankind, now weak and groaning under the administration of sin and death? "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

—Z. '01:263-264.

◆

COULD OUR EXAMPLE LEAD ANOTHER INTO THE SECOND DEATH?

The question comes up, in what way could a brother's example so stumble another that he could go into the second death? We answer that if one should be influenced by another to violate conscience, one might thus be started on the downward course which would lead him from righteousness. It might be a small matter to begin with, but shortly it would lead off into sin. We should so guard our actions and our words that others would be made stronger and more tender in their consciences; we should try as far as possible to help them in the right way.

The Apostle speaks of our liberty becoming a stumbling-block to those that are weak—"For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?" (1 Cor. 8:10.) Thus we might, unintentionally, not only offset the good that we might do, but do harm when we are not aware of it. If the same tongue can curse men and praise God (James 3:9), how careful we should be to speak that only which will be helpful and uplifting and not destructive and injurious!

—Z. '11:170, 171.

◆

The Lord seems to look out for those who are of a ready mind, emptied of self and filled with his spirit, and zealous, to be used in his hand, and such are his special servants. Let us all more and more be emptied vessels for the Master's use made meet.

—Z. '97:59.

◆

The anointed ones are not to spend their time endeavoring to break the hard hearts of the worldly, for this is not a part of its commission. God himself, through various providences, is attending to the work of breaking the hard hearts; some are broken and softened by the trials, difficulties, perplexities and adversities of the present life; some are torn and bleeding through severe trials of life and earthly disappointments; and the time of trouble fast approaching is specially designed of the Lord as the time for breaking and melting many hard hearts, in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom and its blessings of restitution, etc.—Z. '00:55, 56.

◆

Error is never clear; it is always confused and confusing. Clearness and simplicity, on the contrary, are marks of the truth.—Z. '02:5.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER THIRTY-NINE

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Treasures in Heaven

SINCE we have become new creatures in Christ we are finding new treasures—treasures of divine knowledge which will never pass away, treasures of experience and wisdom developing in us what the Lord recognizes as precious graces of character, treasures of good works that shall not be forgotten when the day of final reckoning shall make them manifest, and treasures of heavenly friendships that shall never be severed while the years of eternity roll.

O what joy there will be in heaven when we find our treasures there, all safely kept where moth and rust could not corrupt and where thieves could not break through and steal.

When the heavenly Banker says, Well done, good and faithful servant, and the treasure of heavenly approval and love and commendation sinks down deep in our enraptured hearts, tell me, will we not feel that the measure of joy which began even here and was numbered among our choicest treasures has there gained compound interest? And when a precious saint then glorified greets us with tender, grateful love, saying, You helped me hither, or You recovered me from falling when my feet had well nigh slipped; and when another and another of these treasures throng about us to bid us welcome to their midst, will we not indeed rejoice over the investment of toil or care or effort of any kind which has brought such results.

Besides the treasures of friendship which will never die, there will be treasures of love that will never grow old, treasures of esteem for the sake of our work and personal sacrificing that will never be forgotten, treasures of experience that will serve us eternally, treasures of wisdom that will enrich us forever, treasures of divine approval that will wreath a halo of glory around us which shall never pale, and treasures of glory, honor and immortality beyond our present powers to fully appreciate.

—Z. '98: 109, 110.

CONVENTION

Yakima, Wash., August 19, 20 and 21, evenings, and August 22 all day. Possibly further sessions will be arranged for August 20 and 21. For further information please apply to Brother J. V. Gresham, R.F.D., No. 7, Yakima, Wash., Secretary of Convention.

All Standfast Bible Students cordially invited to attend.

It is not sufficient that we be first justified, and then sanctified through a consecration to the Lord; nor is it sufficient that we get into the body of Christ and become branches of the Vine. It is good to be a little shoot, it is good to have buds of promise, it is good to grow as a branch and put forth tendrils, but however large or small the branch may be, however old or young, we must remember that the sap which produces the fruit can only be obtained by **continued** union with the Vine and its root of promise. If ever separated, all hopes must wither. Only as we are in Christ, and through him heirs of God, have we part or lot in this matter; and only so can we bring forth the fruits which the great Husbandman seeks. It **would be folly for the branch to say, I needed at first to be united with Christ the Vine, but now I can stand alone.** Whoever stands alone, whoever is separated from the Vine and from the other branches, will speedily wither away; and whoever abides in the Vine must surely continue to have **fidelity** to the Vine, **must be at one with all the other true branches of the same Vine.'** And here we see the importance of being in the **true** Vine and at-one with the **true** branches.

—Z. '99: 109-110.

◆

The loving favor of God, so much appreciated by the saints that they consecrate their earthly all to obtain it, is not merely a favor as respects future prospects and hopes—not merely as respects the Kingdom to come and the glory and the honor and immortality then to be granted to such as are in divine favor, but it extends to the present life. Gradually we come to appreciate fellowship and communion with the Father to such a degree as to produce misery of soul if this communion is interrupted.. And this sentiment is beautifully expressed in the hymn which we sometimes sing:—

"Sun, of my soul, my Father dear,
I know no night when thou art near;
O let no earth-born cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

—Z. '01: 245.

◆

Whenever a new trial is presented to the Christian, if he will but call to mind this precept of the Lord, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire," it will stimulate courage, nerve to patient endurance, and quicken to self-sacrifice. "Gold tried in the fire!" How can it be tried without the crucible and the flame? How otherwise can the dross be eliminated? There is no other way. "Wherefore, think it not strange:" let the fire burn; let the dross be consumed; and see to it, beloved, that in the heat of the flame you remove not the "living sacrifice" from the altar.—Z. '96: 44, 45.

◆

The fact is, that the Lord's consecrated people, through faith and by God's holy spirit, have inside information respecting "the things not seen as yet."

—Z. '00: 342.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER THIRTY-NINE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"Where a brother gives an interpretation of a Scripture which differs from that given by Brother Russell, and Brother Russell's interpretation seems reasonable and in harmony with the plan of God, then we believe it a safe rule to follow Brother Russell's interpretation, for the reason that he is the servant of the Church, so constituted by the Lord for the Laodicean period; and therefore we should expect the Lord to teach us through Him. Where there arises a doubt in the mind as to which interpretation is correct, then it is always safer to resolve that doubt in favor of Brother Russell's interpretation. We believe such to be in harmony with the Lord's will. Z. '18: 51.

The Three Great Covenants

CHRISTENDOM in general recognizes only two Covenants, the Old or Law Covenant, with Moses as its mediator, and the New Covenant, with Christ as its Mediator. Christendom may be said to know nothing whatever about the Abrahamic Covenant. When rarely they recognize the Abrahamic Covenant at all, or enter it into their calculations, they identify it with the New Covenant. We all inherited this general line of thought through Sunday-School sermons, commentaries, etc. It is not strange, therefore, that we all had this confused conception of this subject. Gradually, as a part of the light due to the Church in the end of this age, we got to see that there are three Covenants, instead of two, as we first supposed. We got to see that the Abrahamic Covenant, the original one, is the grandest and best of the three, and that from it the other two proceeded. This light upon the Divine purpose we (Brother Russell) began to set forth in the Watch Tower in 1880, and later elaborated the same thought in the **Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices.** In the latter we set forth that these Covenants are represented in the garments of the High Priest, in the ephod of two parts, with its shoulder-clasps and jewelled breast-plate. However, we did not discern so sharply as we now do the clear-cut distinctions between those three Covenants. And is not this in full acord with the Lord's general dealing with us and with all people throughout the age? Is it not his proposition that the "Path of the just shall shine more and more unto the perfect day"? We believe that it is.

Growing in Grace and Knowledge

Remember that a clear understanding of every detail of God's Plan, while desirable, is not necessarily essential to our blessing thereunder. For instance, we believed in the precious blood of Christ and were justified thereby freely from all things, when we did not at all understand the philosophy of the Atonement—even as the majority of Christian people do not understand it now. The increasing knowledge did not bring increasing justification, but it did bring increased appreciation and love and devotion and opportunity for greater harmony with the Divine purposes better understood.

I.—Grace. II.—Law. III.—Works

St. Paul pointed out to us most distinctly that the original Covenant made with an oath to Abraham was in every way the superior one and that it, being a one-sided Covenant, an unconditional promise, has no mediator. St. Paul tells us that the Law Covenant was "added" to the Abrahamic Covenant in God's dealing with the nation of Israel. It is called a Law Covenant because the benefits of that Covenant were offered only to those who would keep the Law in all its requirements—inviolate. He calls it the Hagar Covenant, because it was a bondage and because its offspring, the Jewish nation, could not inherit the promised blessings and privileges. He tells us that it made nothing perfect, brought nothing to perfection. Although faith had a place and the grace of God had some manifestation towards Israel, yet neither faith nor grace affected their Covenant, which was hard and fast and demanded obedience to the works of the Law—"He that doeth these things shall live by them." Since none could do perfectly, that Covenant of works brought only condemnation of their imperfect works. It had a mediator, Moses, but he was unable to accomplish anything for the people, because of their imperfection through heredity. We properly call this the Law Covenant.

The Apostle points that as Hagar's child was born before Isaac, who represented The Christ, Head and Body, "The New Creation," so the nation of Israel, Moses and all the people baptized into him in the sea and in the cloud, "The house of servants," would be developed before Spiritual Israel, the New Creation—Christ and all the members of the house of sons of spirit-begetting.

As the Covenant of Grace (Sarah) existed before the Law Covenant was added to it, so it continued to exist after the Law Covenant was set aside as a Covenant, its prize of life eternal having been won by "the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all." So, then, the Covenant of Grace (Sarah), which preceded the Law Covenant (Hagar) four hundred and thirty years, continued alive during the whole period of the Law Covenant, but without children, and then brought forth the Head of the Seed, Jesus. The Law Covenant was then cast aside—"Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman"—The Christ, the Heir of the original promise, now being developed. From the Scriptural standpoint the Resurrection is the birth: as, for instance, our Lord is the "First-Born from the dead, the First-Born amongst many brethren," and "his brethren," "his members," "his Bride" (three different names for the "elect" Church), must all be brought forth from the dead, all be "changed" to spirit condition before the Seed of Abraham will be complete.

"If Ye Be Christ's, Then Are Ye Abraham's Seed and Heirs."—Gal. 3:29

This is the Mystery—the selection of the Church as the Bride of Christ during this Gospel Age, to be sharers with their Redeemer in the sufferings of this present time, and also in the glory that shall follow. Hence the Apostle was very solicitous that he might have share in "His Resurrection." The Christ Resurrection, "The First Resurrection." Not until that "First Resurrection" is finished will the Seed of the Sarah Covenant be fully born. This is quite in accord with the prophetic statement, "Shall I bring to the birth (deliver the Head), and not cause to come forth (the Body)." (Isa. 66:9.) The intimation is that so surely as Jesus, the Head of the Body, was brought forth in the Resurrection, born from the dead, so surely will all the members of his Body share with him his glorious "change" from mortality to immortality, from earthly to heavenly nature.

What about the Jews under the Law (Hagar) Covenant? Were they on that account cut off from the very privileges and blessings which they so desired—of being Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise? We answer, Yes. The Apostle shows that the children of the bond-woman could not be heirs with the children of the free-woman. How, then, did the apostles and others, who were of Israel according to the flesh, come into relationship with Christ and the Sarah Covenant (of grace)? The Apostle tells us that as a human marriage is dissolved by the death of one of the parties, so those of the Jews who could recognize by faith that Christ's death had fulfilled the terms of the Law Covenant could realize that that Covenant was dead, and hence, that they were freed from it and could become married to another—united to Christ. On the contrary any Jew who does not recognize that Christ, by his death, has "made an end of the Law, nailing it to his cross," and who still continues to believe in that Covenant, is as firmly bound thereby as though the Covenant were still alive; just as a woman whose husband was really dead, but she **thought him alive,** could not conscientiously marry another.

"When I Shall Take Away Their Sins"

The Apostle explains that all of that nation who lacked proper faith in Christ were cast off, "blinded," not forever, but until the completion of the House of Sons, the New Creation, the spirit members of the spiritual Body of spiritual Israel—The Christ. Ah! but, says one, if they be cast off, "blinded," until the elect Church is complete, then they can have no part in it; and, being under the conditions of the Hagar (Law) Covenant, will they not be in an unsatisfactory state, under a New Covenant? And according to this evidence, did not God rather deceive the nation of Israel, when he entered into the Law Covenant with them at Sinai, knowing that they could not keep it, and could not get life under it, and yet permitting them, so supposing, to put themselves under that bondage? Are not the Lord's ways just and equal?

Yes, we answer, and the full scope of the Divine purpose when seen is glorious in its harmony. The difficulty in the past has been that we have seen as through an obscured glass, and not face to face. Now we perceive that God intends to recognize two seeds of Abraham, the one heavenly, like unto the stars of heaven; the other earthly, like unto the sands of the seashore. The attempt of the Law Covenant to bring forth the natural seed first was abortive—a failure. First must come the spiritual Christ, Head and Body, partaker of the divine nature, heir of all things. Then God's favor will return to natural Israel. But since the Law Covenant completed its purpose and was demonstrated to be unavailable for them, because of the weaknesses of the flesh, God purposes to make with that nation, and with that nation alone, a New Covenant. Not a single statement of Scripture identifies the New Covenant with the Gentiles. On the contrary, it is Israel's New Covenant given to displace the Old or Law Covenant. Let us note well that the great mass of the early Church were Hebrews and that the Apostle's references to the New Covenant are almost exclusively in his epistle to the Hebrews. One exception is in Rom. 11:27, where the Apostle, although addressing Christians of Gentile birth, tells them that natural Israel was cast off for their sakes, but is still beloved for the father's sake, and is again to have Divine favor, under a special Covenant. The other (2 Cor. 3:6) refers to the royal priesthood as able (qualified) servants of the New Covenant—dying with Christ for its sealing.—Mal. 3:1.

The more closely we investigate the New Covenant, the more we must be convinced of this fact—that it belongs to Israel alone, including the two nations into which they divided at the death of Solomon—Israel and Judah. Note the statement of the Prophet, "Behold the days will come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the Covenant [the Law Covenant] which I made with them when I took them by the hand and led them out of the land of Egypt." The Apostle, endeavoring to prove to the Jews that they could gain nothing under the Law Covenant, points out this prophecy, and tells them that the fact that God speaks of this as a New Covenant implies that a preceding [Law] Covenant had become old, valueless, and was preparing to pass away—"In that he saith, a New Covenant, he hath made the first old; now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."—Heb. 8:13.

The Oath-Bound Covenant Sure—Heb. 6:17-20

The New Covenant is to take the place of the old and unsatisfactory one. There were two old Covenants, the Grace, or Sarah Covenant, and the Law, or Hagar Covenant. Which did the Apostle mean had grown old, valueless, and would pass away and give place to the New Covenant? Surely there can be no doubt or misunderstanding on this point. He meant the Law Covenant, for he says so. He did not mean the original Grace or Sarah Covenant, for he points out that our claim to relationship to God is under that original Covenant, as members of the Body of Christ, members of the Bride of Christ, Joint-Heirs with him. Our Lord Jesus, by his obedience, became heir of all, heir of the original Covenant and heir also of the Law Covenant. Of the people there was none with him, neither Jews nor Gentiles. But by the grace of God there was provision made, as we have seen, that any Jew, seeing that the Law Covenant was dead, nailed to the cross, might become betrothed to Christ. They did not need to wait for the New Covenant, the provisions of which apply only to those on the earthly plane. Instead, by a faith justification and a consecration unto death, they were counted worthy of begetting to the new nature—betrothal to Christ. And similarly Gentiles, favored of God by the hearing ear and seeing eye of faith, were subsequently privileged to go through the same process, except that they did not need to reckon themselves dead to the Law Covenant, because they never were under it. Otherwise, recognizing Christ's death as the blood of the original Covenant, typified by Abraham's offering up his son, these also were reckoned justified and, presenting their justified bodies to the Lord as sacrifices, they were begotten of the same holy Spirit as the Jews, to be fellow-members of the same Body—the Body of Christ.

We come now to the other part of the question: What provision has God made for those Jews who bound themselves under the Law Covenant, from Moses' day down to the first advent; and for those who since then have not discerned the death of the Law Covenant and who will not be made aware of it until after the spiritual Seed shall have been completed and glorified? If they have not lost all share and privileges in connection with God's special mercies, where do they come in? We answer that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others before the Law Covenant were not bound by it, yet were not in the fullest sense justified to life until the Abrahamic Covenant had been established at Calvary. Their faith, then, entitled them to a share in the merits of that sacrifice. Likewise throughout the period of the Law Covenant, before it was annulled at the cross, there were Ancient Worthies who lived above the masses of their time, and who, although bound by the Law, had above it a living faith in the original Oath-Bound (Sarah) Covenant of Grace. These in the Divine records were entitled to their share of that grace, as soon as the merit of Calvary's sacrifice had been presented on behalf of believers, when Jesus "ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God on our behalf." Although they lived while the Law Covenant was alive, they foresaw its death and trusted not in it, but in the superior Covenant of Grace. Hence these in due time will come forth to a life resurrection, not because of their relationship to the Law Covenant, under which they lived, nor because of their relationship to the New Covenant, of which some of them knew nothing, but because of their relationship to and faith in the original (Sarah) Covenant of Grace.

Thus the Scriptures account for the faithful ones of the past under the Covenant of Grace. But what now shall we say respecting those earthly Israelites, who lived not on that higher plane of faith, but of whom the Apostle says, "Our twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hope to come" unto this promise. (Acts 26:7.) Were they all deceived? Will they get those special blessings?

God's Gifts and Callings Sure.—Rom. 11:29-32

Nay, we answer, the gifts and calling of God are things not to be repented of. He who knew the end from the beginning knew exactly what Israel would be and do, and was not disappointed, and all of the plans and promises to that nation were made from the standpoint of this knowledge. Although the chief feature of the Sarah Covenant was secured by our Lord Jesus as a trophy of his victory over sin and death, and although he laid down his human nature completely to this end, nevertheless the Divine arrangement is such that the blood of Christ, the merit of his sacrifice of earthly things, must accrue to the benefit of the natural seed of Abraham, because it all goes to seal the New Covenant, which belongs exclusively to fleshly Israel. The opportunity granted to both the Jews and Gentiles to become Joint-Heirs with the Redeemer was based upon their offering themselves to him in sacrifice, and his acceptance of their offerings as his own—his sacrificing them throughout this age as his own flesh—and God's acceptance of them as New Creatures, begotten of the Spirit, as brethren of Christ, or the betrothed of Christ, or members of his Body. Only by thus sharing with our Lord, drinking his cup, being baptized into his baptism of death, surrendering all into his hand, can we have fellowship with him in his sufferings; and his death (including ours) seals the New Covenant in his blood, of which he said, "Drink ye all of it." In his cup we are partakers, joint-sacrificers.—1 Cor. 10:16.

Thus while natural Israel had been counted enemies for our sakes, for the Gospel's sake, our only opportunity for gaining the great prize is in connection with the sealing of a New Covenant between God and Israel. How beautifully the features of the Divine program balance! Their loss was our gain, and our gain through sacrifice becomes their gain; and, altogether, the Lord will be glorified!

As already shown, the New Covenant will not be sealed, ratified, until the sacrifices of The Christ shall have been finished. And the finishing of these sacrifices closes the work of this great Day of Sacrifice and Atonement. With the second presentation of the blood of Atonement in the Most Holy, at the end of this age, the New Covenant with Israel will be sealed, and the blessing of the Lord will begin to Israel. "For this is my Covenant with **them,** when I shall take away their sins."—Rom. 11:27.

Abraham's Two Seeds

Not only did the original promise indicate two seeds of Abraham—one as the stars of heaven, and the other as the sands of the sea—but St. Paul elaborates this thought, saying of the promise, "It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to **all** the seed: not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (including you who are Romans): as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations." We have seen how Abraham, as a type of God, is the father of the spiritual Seed and how through Christ, by the provision of the New Covenant, the Jewish nation, dead under the Law Covenant, is to be regenerated by The Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant: and that this regeneration will commence at the close of this Gospel Age and the opening of the Millennial Age. But these are only two—"the (Church) holy nation," and the (Jewish) chosen nation. How do all nations come in? It will not do to say the Body of Christ, the Bride class, fulfils this prophecy, because, although they were taken out of the nations, they are not all nations, and do not even represent all nations. Each first died to his earthly estate and nationality, before he was begotten of the holy Spirit to be a member of the holy nation, the New Creation.

The Scriptures distinctly show that Christ and his Church, spirit beings, must constitute the Kingdom class, but they also show that the Ancient Worthies, and through them the nation of Israel under the New Covenant, will become the representatives of the heavenly Kingdom amongst men. It will be with these that the blessing of the Lord in the Millennial morning will begin. Thus we read of Jacob's trouble, that he shall be saved out of it and that the Lord will restore their judges as at the first, and their law-givers as at the beginning—the Ancient Worthies resurrected on the earthly plane. (Jer. 30:7; Zech. 12:7.) The New Covenant will be the Law Covenant over again, only that it will have the better Mediator—The Christ, Head and Body, who will be able to make allowances for the imperfections of Israel's heredity. The sins of the past will all be forgiven, their physical blemishes waiting for restitution. They will be dealt with according to what they are, allowances being made in each individual case, and each will be required to heed the voice of the antitypical Moses. "And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not heed that Prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people."—Acts 3:23.

Hope for the Many Nations

Since God's favors are thus marked out for the heavenly and the earthly Seeds of Abraham—the earthly through the heavenly—it follows that the blessing of the other nations will come about through their affiliation with these. In other words, we may understand that the Divine Government established in Israel in the hands of the Ancient Worthies will be the center of Divine favor, and the people of other nationalities must come to this center for their supplies of truth and grace. Thus the Prophet represents the matter, saying, "Many nations shall go and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain (Kingdom) of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the Law shall go forth from Mount Zion (the spiritual Kingdom) and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem (the center of the earthly Kingdom)."—Micah 4:2.

As thus all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues shall be brought gradually to an appreciation of the Divine Plan: they shall all be blessed with Restitution privileges and opportunities and with an enlightenment from the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, which then through the appointed channels will be flooding all the earth. Thus will the original Covenant have its amplified fulfilment; first, in The Christ, the spiritual Israel; secondly, under the New Covenant with Israel after the flesh; and through these bless all the families of the earth, so that all the willing and obedient may gradually attain to the standards of the children of God and be possessed of the "liberties of the sons of God"—freedom from sin, sorrow, pain and death. As the old Law Covenant was with Israel only, so the New (Law) Covenant will be with Israel only. Other nations will share it by becoming Israelites, "Proselytes of the gate," not under the old but under the New Covenant. (Ezek. 16:60, 61.) "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

"Know your calling." Let us who have accepted the Divine call in Christ bear in mind that, according to the Apostle's declaration, we are the children of the Sarah Covenant. We are the Bride of Isaac, and his Joint-Heirs, of whom it is written, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise." Our only relationship to the New Covenant is that the Father drew us to Jesus and Jesus covered us with his robe of righteousness and thus made it possible for us to be called to joint-fellowship with himself in the "better sacrifices," **participation** in the "cup" of suffering and death—"the blood of the New Covenant"—for the sealing of the New Covenant for Israel, under which all the families of the earth will get a blessing. Thus in the divine purpose our Lord's death or blood justified the Church and (with the Church's) will seal the New Covenant for Israel and through Israel will become effective to all of Adam's race. "As **all in Adam** die, even so **all in Christ** shall be made alive—every man in his own order."

The Church comes into Christ as his Members or Body or Bride. Israel will come into The Christ family as children. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children." And this same privilege shall extend to all— to become **regenerated** "in the regeneration" when we shall sit with him on his throne.

The Everlasting Covenant

Both the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant are Scripturally styled "The Everlasting

Covenant," in contrast with the Law Covenant, which passed away, a failure because of its "unprofitableness." (Heb. 7:18.) The one is perpetuated in the other, even as the spiritual Seed (spiritual Israel) will rule and bless through the earthly Seed (fleshly Israel). Note the Scripture testimony that the original Grace (or Sarah) Covenant is everlasting. (Gen. 17:7, 13, 19; 2 Sam. 23:5; Psa. 105:8-10.) Note other Scriptures which apply the same term prophetically to the New Covenant. (Jer. 32:40; 31:31, 32; Ezk. 16:60.) Note carefully the context in each instance, that the reference is to the Millennium.

The Blood of the Everlasting Covenant

The blood of the Everlasting Covenant is the "blood of Jesus," his sacrifice, through the merit of which **believers** are now **"justified by faith"** under the Grace or Sarah Covenant (not by the New Covenant which does not yet exist and which is to be made only with Israel). And the blood or sacrifice of Jesus is "the blood of the New Covenant," yet to be established with Fleshly Israel, just the same **only** that by the Father's good pleasure Jesus is now accepting the "little flock" as his members and counting their sacrifice or blood as a part of his own.

Note how this is set forth in Isaiah 55:1-3. Here believers of this Gospel Age are described as those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Under the Father's drawing they come to Jesus **now.** They are not of those who, blind and deaf under Satan's power, love darkness rather than light and will need the Kingdom regulations and corrections to make them bow and confess, under the New Covenant arrangement with Israel and indirectly with all nations.

To these hungry, thirsty, seeing, hearing, believers the Lord offers the "fatness" or cream of the Everlasting Covenant, saying, Obey and your soul shall live and I will give unto you the sure or promised mercies of David. David means beloved and is another name for the Redeemer, the antitypical King of Israel by Divine appointment.

This prophecy evidently, therefore, is the prophecy of the call of this Gospel Age to share with Jesus the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom. Note the context, "A nation that thou knowest not shalt thou call, and a nation that knew thee not shall run into thee." (V. 5.) Unquestionably this is the Church—Spiritual Israel, "a holy nation," a peculiar people, chosen out of all nations to the heavenly Kingdom of the Millennium.

Note the description of Christ Jesus and his "Body" in Isaiah 42:1-7. Note that Messiah is **"given"** for [sacrificed in the interest of] a Covenant **to the** people (Israel) and for a light to the nations or heathen, to enable them all to come in that light under the blessings of Israel's New Covenant.

Come now to Hebrews 13:20, "Now the God of peace who brought again from the dead the Great Shepherd of the sheep (Jesus), **through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant make you perfect."** Does this refer to our justification from Adamic guilt and reconciliation to God? Not at all. The Father will have nothing to do with us (except to "draw" us to Jesus for justification and consecration) until **after** our justification. Then his mighty power which brought our Great Shepherd from the tomb to glory and immortality begins to mightily "work in us to will and to do his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13.) If we abide in his love he will perfect us as **New Creatures** by the privileges granted us of sharing in the sufferings of Christ—**participating in the shedding of the blood of the Everlasting Covenant,** which as the New Covenant will bring blessings to Israel and then to the world. The Greek word here rendered "perfect you" signifies "knit you together," that is, make you completely one with the Shepherd as his "members" both in sufferings and in glory to follow.

Note also that in Hebrews 10:29 it is the blood of the Covenant that **sanctified** and not the blood that **justified** that, sinned against, merits the Second Death. We were justified by faith in the blood of Jesus. We were sanctified by our consecration to drink of his cup—the blood of the New Covenant. Only those who have **gone on** to this second degree and presented themselves as sacrificers (Romans 12:1) and have been accepted or sanctified by the begetting of the holy Spirit, as members of the "Body" of Christ and sons of the Highest, **can commit** the sin unto death. "If any man [thus presented and sanctified] draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back unto perdition"—Second Death.—Heb. 10:39.

Let us now briefly refer to all the Scriptures which mention the New Covenant, that we may note their full harmony with the foregoing. We have already examined the one statement connected with our text and see that it applies to the closing of this age—a shaking of the nations and everything out of harmony with God, preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom, as the foundation of the New Covenant blessings to the world during the Millennium. There are just eight other texts in the New Testament which refer to the New Covenant:

(1) "For this cause he is made Mediator of a better Covenant [not better than the Grace or Sarah Covenant, but better than the Law Covenant], which was established upon better promises." (Heb. 8:6.) Our Lord Jesus had already begun the work necessary to his fulfilling this office of Mediator of the New Covenant. He had laid the foundation, but he had not yet accepted to himself all the members the Father intended and foreknew and predestinated. We notice from the context that the contrast still is between the Law Covenant and its Mediator Moses, and the New Covenant, superior because of its better Mediator, the Messiah. Moses could offer only imperfect sacrifices, but Christ, by antitypical sacrifices of the bullock and goat (himself and his Body), makes satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and prepares to mediate the New Covenant, which God has promised shall be his channel for blessing Israel and the world.

(2) In the succeeding verse (8) the Apostle supports his argument by a quotation from the Old Testament promise to Israel of a New Covenant, saying, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Clearly this does not refer to Spiritual Israel.

(3) Neither does the next reference to the New Covenant, which is a part of the same quotation from Jer. 31:31, refer to Spiritual Israel—"Not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers. . . . For this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."—Heb. 8:8-10.

The days referred to in the above are "after" the days of this Gospel Age. The Apostle goes on to say, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest, and I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." This is a description of what will take place during the Millennium, and not a description of what we see about us today. God has not yet put his laws into the hearts of the house of Israel, and they are not his people, as he states they will be at the proper time in the end of this age when the New Covenant becomes operative. Compare Acts 15:15.

(4) "In that he saith, a New Covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Notice that the Apostle is not saying one word about the New Covenant being for the Church of Christ. His readers understood very well that they came in under the Sarah Covenant. But certain Judaizing teachers insisted that they must be under the Hagar Covenant, as well as under the Sarah Covenant. And this is what the Apostle is disputing. He is making clear that the (Hagar) Law Covenant would not continue, but perish, and that, in God's due time, he would provide a New Covenant to take its place with Israel.

(5) It was necessary that Jews be redeemed from the "dead works" of the old Law Covenant and that a New one be made for them by Christ—Head and members. The old one was sealed by the blood of **bulls and goats**, but the New one by "better sacrifices." Antitypically the blood of the bullock has been offered, and soon that of the goat will be presented.—Heb. 9:14-23.

(6) "This is the Covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now, where remission of sins is, there is no more offering for sin." (Heb. 10:16-18.) The Apostle is arguing along general lines. He would have his hearers understand that when an acceptable sacrifice has been offered to God for sins, the transaction is a closed one, and the sacrifice needs no repetition. He shows that this will be so in the future for the world. When the "better sacrifices," sealing the New Covenant, shall have been offered to God by our Redeemer, and accepted by him, it will mean the cancellation of all condemnation. On the strength of this work for the future the Apostle urges that we, the Body of Christ, whose sins have been atoned for by our Lord, the first sacrifice of the Day of Atonement (in the type the bullock), may count that our sins are completely cancelled, and will be remembered against us no more. "For by one offering he (Christ) hath perfected forever them that are sanctified": all justified by faith, who proceed to full consecration and sanctification. If numbered amongst the sanctified, we may know that our sins are completely obliterated from the Divine record, so far as justice is concerned, and that we have entered upon a new record as New Creatures and will be held accountable only for trespasses against our covenant to the Lord, our vow—by which we became members of the Christ, the Seed of Abraham, and heirs of the great (Sarah) Covenant of Grace.

(7) "For this is my Covenant to **them**, when I shall take away **their** sins. As concerning the Gospel **they** are enemies for **your** sakes; but as touching the elect, **they** are beloved for the father's sake." (Rom. 11:27, 28.) There is no room to doubt that the Apostle here is referring to Israel's Covenant, the New Covenant, which God will make with them after this Gospel Day. The Apostle says the Covenant will be made when, or at the time that the Lord will "take away their sins." That time has not yet come. Israel is still under Divine condemnation, though we are now privileged to speak comfortably unto them and to assure them that the time for their deliverance is nigh, the time when the Mediator of the New Covenant will have taken on the last members of the spirit Body, the Gospel Church, "changed" by the power of the First Resurrection; the time when he will mediate that New Covenant, satisfy the demands of Divine justice on behalf of the world, as he already has satisfied it on behalf of the Church. Then he will become, as previously intended and declared, the great Mediator of the New Covenant between God and mankind in general—the Church being the exception, under the Covenant of Grace. Then will he begin his Millennial Kingdom: "For he must reign until he shall have put all enemies under his feet, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Then all who drank of his "cup," the blood [sacrifice] of the New Covenant, as members of the Spiritual Seed, will reign with him.—Gal. 3:29.

(8) "But ye are approached unto Mt. Zion, . . . to the New Jerusalem, . . . to the general assembly and Church of the Firstborns, . . . and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant and to the blood of sprinkling." (Heb. 12:24.) Here spiritual Israel is pictured as an army marching and the things at the farther end are seen and to be reached. Jesus reached the end of the way long ago, but the Church of Firstborns is not there yet. Jesus is the Mediator, but he has accepted the Church as his Bride, his Body, and waits for her arrival. The picture shows that the New Law Covenant will be established as the old Law Covenant was, only on a higher plane and through a greater Mediator and by better sacrifices.—Acts 3:23.

Not one of these references to the New Covenant makes the slightest suggestion that it is applicable to the Church. A reference to the original prophecy from which the Apostle quotes shows that it could not apply to the Church, for we there read that the Lord "will take away their stony hearts out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh." This is exactly the Restitution Work which will begin with

Israel and extend to all the families of the earth, but it is not at all the work of this Gospel Age, which is far higher. The Lord does not give the "little flock" hearts of flesh, but, justified by faith, allows them to sacrifice the flesh, and begets them to a new nature, the glorious Seed of Abraham, through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed, by the inauguration of the New Covenant, sealed, made operative by the merit of the blood of Christ.—Z. '09: 27-31.

The Walk to Emmaus

Luke 24: 13-32.

"He opened to us the Scriptures."—Luke 24:32.

ONE thought in connection with this familiar narrative is the privilege and blessing of the communion of saints. Wherever two or three are met together in my name, said the Lord, there am I in the midst. (Matt. 18: 20.) These two disciples were earnestly discussing the sad events of the last few days, which so perplexed them all. They had trusted that he who had just been crucified was the true Messiah foretold by the prophets: he had seemed to fit the descriptions of the prophets so perfectly, but now he was very generally esteemed as "smitten of God and afflicted." Their sad and perplexed faces were indexes of their minds. They had loved the Lord and trusted in him, and they delighted to call to mind his sweet spirit, his wise counsel, his wonderful teaching and his great love for each of them personally. How strange it seemed that such a one should so perish!

Yes, they loved the Lord, and delighted to speak one with another, and to think upon his name; and the Lord hearkened and heard it (Mal. 3: 16, 17): he was beside them all the while though they knew it not, and soon he seemed to overtake them, and gave them a stranger's greeting. Then followed the marvelous opening up of the Scriptures to them. How familiar the stranger seemed to be with the law and the prophets: and how wonderfully he wove together the web of logical and Scriptural argument, to prove it necessary that Messiah must suffer these things before he could enter into his glory! Surely enough, it was all there in the sacred writings, but they had never seen it so before. How reasonable, too, when thus viewed!

Then they told him of the strange news they had heard of his resurrection that very morning; and as he further explained how this also was so to be, as foretold by the prophets, they drew near home and the stranger was therefore about to take leave of them. But their interest in the conversation was too deep to part thus abruptly with him, and they urged him to tarry and partake of their hospitality.

Earnest inquiry and generous hospitality were strong incentives to the Lord, as they always are. So he accepted the invitation: and soon they were made cognizant of the fact that the Lord himself was indeed their guest. And his blessing sank deep in their hearts, and they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us by the way?

Let us take to our hearts the precious lesson of this incident, that we may enjoy more and more of the blessings of communion with the Lord and with each other. If our hearts are humble, earnest and true; if our delight is in the Lord and his truth; if our actions are guided by the noble principles of truth and righteousness; and if our candid, thoughtful endeavor is always to find the purest principles and the exact truth to the end that we may conform our lives thereto, then indeed the Lord will be pleased to dwell with us and to manifest himself to us as he does not unto the world.—John 14: 21. ·Z. '95: 135, 136.

In Due Time

TIME is one of the most important factors in God's plan. The days of creation were long periods of time; the time of man's experience with evil has been six days of a thousand years each; the day of redemption and of the development of the Church has been nearly two thousand years. Time has been necessary for the accomplishment of God's great work; and it has also been necessary in proving to man the righteousness of God's character. Only time could prove to men his invincible justice. Six thousand years ago his sentence of death passed upon mankind, and during all that time he has permitted generation after generation to go down into the grave in the midst of agony, blood and tears. And though he loved men so, even while they were yet sinners, that he spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all, yet he has never for a moment relented so as to interpose his power for the relief or release of the groaning creation: nor will he do so until his "due time"—the time which his wisdom appointed, which will be the very best time for the securing of the largest possible results to the race, both of knowledge and of advantageous experience, as well as for the development of several of the most important features of his plan. But as time only can develop God's plan, so time only can manifest his love as well as his wisdom, his grace, his power and his justice.

Time will fully manifest the divine wisdom in what seems to short-sighted humanity like pitiless delay. Already those who are privileged to view by faith the divine plan see the necessity of time for its full accomplishment. It is in view of such necessity that the children of God are frequently exhorted to patience. God has kindly brought us to his standpoint of view and bidden us look into the glorious future—to the outcome of his plan: and in proportion as we are able to comprehend and believe it, we may rest and rejoice in it. But in the meantime, being thus graciously refreshed by the cheering prospect, we must patiently wait for the end, however painful the waiting season may be.

Patience is a virtue which our heavenly Father desires to cultivate in us: and he manifests in himself the grandest example of it. Through all the centuries past he has patiently endured the reproaches of those who, failing to understand the course of his wisdom in executing justice and in working out the deep designs of his abounding grace, attributed evil, and only evil, to his truly glorious and holy character. He knows that **"in due time"** his character will be fully vindicated, and so he patiently waits and works and endures. So also our Lord Jesus waits and endures. He endured great humiliation in coming to our low estate. Then as a man he patiently endured the contradictions of sinners against himself and ungrateful persecution, even unto death, from those he came to save. And, like his heavenly Father, through it all he was cheered in consideration of that **"due time,"** though then in the far distant future, when his character, and also the Father's character, would be fully vindicated and manifested to every creature in heaven and in earth. And still our blessed Lord Jesus and our adorable heavenly Father await with patience the grand consummation. So, in similar attitude of mind, we must wait: for the servant is not above his Lord, and our rejoicing in view of the future will, if we have the mind of Christ, be not only because of our own prospective vindication and glory, but also in prospect of the vindication and glory of God and our Lord Jesus, and of the prospective everlasting triumph of truth and righteousness.

The waiting time is by no means a time of rejoicing, except in hope. This is a time when truth and righteousness are being humbled in the dust, when they that live godly must suffer persecution, when our eyes must look upon scenes of sorrow and mourning, when our ears must hear the wails of distress, and when our feeble flesh must experience the pangs of death. But, oh, there is a glorious release to come **"in due time!"** Wait for it patiently; "Let patience have her perfect work." Submit to the humbling process. The Church's pathway of present humiliation leads to the future glory.

"Humble yourselves," says the Apostle, "under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you **in due time.**" Do not make the great mistake of seeking present exaltation at the expense of that which is to come **"in due time"** to those who patiently endure to the end. It is only in proportion as any turn their eyes away from the glory to follow **"in due time,"** and thus lose faith in it, that they begin to prize the trifling recompenses which the world offers for the sacrifice of their birthright. Let us, therefore, dearly beloved, keep the eye of faith fixed upon the hope set before us in the gospel; and, forgetting those things that are behind—all worldly ambitions, etc.—let us press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling, which shall indeed be realized by the faithful—**"in due time;"** for "Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it." His purposes cannot fail, nor his word return unto him void.—Z. '06: 165, 166.

"Ashamed of Me and My Word"

Luke 9: 26

ONE of the first thoughts to strike us in connection with this text is that our Lord so highly exalts and honors his Word as to put it on a parity with himself. We are not at all surprised at his declaration that those who are ashamed of him he would be ashamed to own as his joint-heirs in the Kingdom—ashamed to own or recognize as of his Bride class. All that is what we should expect, and yet as we look about us how many we find that seem to be ashamed of the Lord. Some may be inclined to controvert this and say, "No Christian is ashamed of Christ; even the nominal Christians are glad to own him Lord of all. The name of Jesus is no longer a name of shame and contempt. God has highly exalted him, and the whole world is coming to adore him more and more every day."

Let us not be too sure that this is the right thought, dear friends. Our own thought is that a certain ideality has been exalted before the minds of civilized people, and that to this ideality they bow and render praise. Our thought is that the real Christ has never had the love or esteem of the world, and that he will not have it until in God's due time the true knowledge shall have filled the earth, and the clouds of ignorance and superstition shall have rolled away, and when the world in general shall have learned some of the great lessons which the time of trouble introducing the Millennial Kingdom will surely teach.

The Christ whom the Jews did not love or esteem or honor, but on the contrary crucified, was holy, harmless, separate from sinners. He was not wealthy, was considered a fanatic because of his loyalty to truth and righteousness, and because he gave his time and energy to loving services for his fellow-creatures and especially in providing spiritual nourishment for them. Therefore his brethren hated him and hid as it were their faces from him—in shame. (Isa. 53: 3.) And hence it was decided that they could not be of the Bride class, and as a nation the Jews were cast off until the elect should be found.

The Lord is still present in the world in the flesh—in the flesh of his consecrated members—and the world in general still despises him as at first and as he foretold—"Marvel not if the world hate you: ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love its own." (John 15:18, 19.) The world is still ashamed of Christ. Nominal Christians, nominal Spiritual Israel, are as much ashamed of him today as Natural Israel was ashamed of him eighteen centuries ago. When we consider that our Lord is represented by his members in the flesh we see that love for the brethren means love for the Lord, and hence as the Apostle states this is one of the great tests of our relationship to him and to the Father. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20.) "Love one another as I have loved you," is the recognized test of discipleship, and he therefore who is ashamed of the brethren is ashamed of the elder brother. He counts all the younger brethren as himself, saying, He that despiseth you despiseth me; he that rejecteth you rejecteth me and him that sent me.—Luke 10:16.

It may be a new thought to some that in despising the brethren they are despising the Lord; that in being ashamed of the brethren they are being ashamed of the Lord; and that thus they would be demonstrating that a wrong condition of mind and conduct prevailed: that they were not fit for the kingdom; that they had not reached the mark of perfect love; that they had not only not learned to love their enemies but had not even learned to love the brethren—those who are striving to walk in the footsteps of the Master.

Ashamed of the Lord's Word

How the Lord's terms and conditions of discipleship do sift and test our very innermost thoughts! He does not address those who burn the Bible nor those who neglect to have a Bible in the house, nor those who neglect to read the Bible, nor those who fail to take their texts from the Bible, nor those who quote the Scriptures incorrectly when they do quote them, but those who in their hearts are ashamed of the Word of God and give evidence of that shame, that lack of appreciation, by their **failure to take their stand in support of the Truth.** Let us test ourselves, let us prove that we are not ashamed of the Lord, of the brethren or of his Word. . . .

The Lord would have a free-minded, open-hearted people, whose hearts would be so loyal to him and to the Truth which he represents that they would gladly surrender everything, even life itself, rather than in any measure impede its progress, rather than in any measure bring dishonor or discredit upon it. . . .

Only those who so love the Lord and his Truth as to be willing, yea, glad to suffer reproaches on their account—only such will be counted worthy of the grand and glorious conditions, opportunities and privileges of the Millennial Kingdom.

—Z. '06:152, 153.

Blessed Are The Persecuted

NOT all the persecuted, but merely the persecuted for righteousness' sake. Many bring upon themselves persecutions for foolishness' sake and for being busybodies in other men's affairs. Let us heed the Apostle's word along this line and avoid persecutions or sufferings for evil doing of any kind; but, as again it is declared, if any man suffer as a Christian let him glorify God on this behalf. (1 Pet. 4:16.) It is well, too, that we preserve in this matter as in all others the spirit of a sound mind. There are, for instance, some that evidently imagine themselves persecuted when really they are very kindly treated, and are the victims of their own morbid imaginations. The Lord's people should be so filled with the spirit of thankfulness and gratitude and appreciation that they would be in no danger of erring in this matter. They should be so generous in their thoughts of the motives and intentions of their friends and neighbors that they would be in no danger of misapprehending them and feeling persecuted by those who are really their well-wishers.

As perfect love casts out fear, so also it casts out these false impressions of evil doing or intention toward us. The benevolent heart, full of love for others, will rather prefer to suppose that sleights are unintentional oversights, or to put some other similar good construction upon the conduct of their friends, only yielding to an appreciation of persecution when its intention is unmistakable. Even then it should think generously of the persecutor, realize his share in the fall and be disposed to pray for those who despitefully use them and persecute them. Blessed are such ones who thus hold to righteousness and the spirit of love toward their enemies and persecutors, and who may be sure, therefore, that they are being persecuted for their fidelity to truth and righteousness and not for personal idiosyncrasies and peculiarities. Blessed are they, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. The Lord is looking for those who are so faithful to the principles of righteousness that they will exercise it toward their enemies even when being persecuted by them and on its account. If the Kingdom of heaven is for such it is assuredly but a little flock.

Reviled for Christ's Sake

The Lord's people are not to revile each other or anybody under any circumstances, but are to remember that they are pupils, followers of him who when reviled reviled not again. Whatever evil others may say or insinuate about us we must be faithful to our Teacher and not return evil for evil, reviling for reviling, nor insinuation for insinuation, but contrariwise must speak evil of no man and be pleased to notice and to mention any good qualities which even our enemies may possess.

Our Lord's words, however, warrant us in expecting that those who will be faithful to him will share his experiences of being evil spoken of. With his words before our minds we should not be surprised at false charges and false insinuations made against his true followers, and that in proportion to their prominence as his servants and followers. The expression, "all manner of evil," is very comprehensive, while "for his sake," is worthy of notice. It does not imply that those who strike with the fist or weapon or tongue and who shoot out arrows, even bitter words, will say, We do this to you for Christ's sake and because you are one of his. We have never heard of any one persecuted in that manner along those lines, and this cannot therefore be what the Lord meant.

What he did mean evidently is that his followers, like himself, honorable, moderate, possessing the spirit of a sound mind, truthful, honest, virtuous, would naturally be highly esteemed amongst the Scribes and Pharisees, the nominally good; they would have a high place, were it not for their fidelity to the Lord and to his Word. Because of loyalty to truths contradictory of popular errors, because of their faithfulness to the Word of the Lord, they are unpopular, and, like the Master, are hated. . . . These conditions bring a test to the faithful ones —Are they willing to endure these persecutions and oppositions cheerfully as a part of the cost of being the Lord's disciples? If under the pressure they yield and revile in return, and slander and backbite, they are proving themselves unworthy of a place in the Kingdom. If on the other hand they receive these lessons and experiences with patience and long-suffering, these serve to develop in them more and more of the character-likeness of their Redeemer and tend the more to fit and prepare them for a share with him in his glorious Kingdom. Our Lord's assurance is that those who are thus tested and who stand such a test will have the greater reward in heaven, and reminds them that similar persecutions from the Lord's professed people came to all the holy prophets of the past.

The Salt of the Earth

The declarations, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and "the light of the world," may be very properly applied to such of the Lord's followers as give heed to his teachings. All such blessed ones in proportion as they have attained such conditions are indeed the salt of the earth and the light of the world. As salt is useful in arresting decomposition, so the influence of these, though they be few in the world, is preservative. Looking back along the aisles of history, we can see that a good influence extended from the Law Covenant God made with Israel.

As the Jews scattered more or less amongst other nationalities they carried with them more or less clear conceptions of the divine standards as represented in the Law, and these wherever they went had a preservative and corrective influence amongst men. But it was Jesus and his higher Law of Love, exemplified in his own life and in the lives of his apostles and all his followers, who became the real salt of the earth, in a period when without it we know not what might have been the result. As it is not only the spot upon which the candle or lamp rests that is enlightened by it, but as the rays extend out in every direction, so is the influence extending from every true Christian. It touches not merely his own person or home but to some extent radiates throughout his vicinity. Similarly it is not merely the spot that is touched by the lump of salt that is preserved, but the influence of that lump spreads over a considerable space round about it, and all with preservative influence.

At the time of our Lord's first advent the world was in a condition in which it would probably have hastened to degeneracy and corruption, but the introduction of the body of Christ and the beneficial influence extending from each member of that body were potent for the arrest of the demoralizing tendency of the times. The light which shone out from Jesus, the Light of the world, and from his followers, had undoubtedly a beneficial effect upon the then center of the civilized world. That influence is still manifest in so-called Christendom. And even today, although the truly consecrated believers in the great Redeemer are confessedly very few in number, yet the general influence, the saltiness from the teachings of the Savior, exercise a wide influence throughout Christendom. Without this, doubtless, corruption and a complete collapse would have come long ago. In spite of it we see very corrupting and corrupt influences at work in every direction and the wider our horizon, the more general our information, the more this fact will be appreciated.

Before very long we expect that all of the overcoming members of the body of Christ will be changed, glorified, and the body completed on the other side the vail will be without members on this side. The lights will have gone and the darkness will hold fuller sway than ever; the salt will be gone and the corruption will take hold swiftly, and the result will be the great time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.

Meantime we are to let our lights shine and thus to glorify the Father, we are to exercise our salt or preservative influence, our influence for righteousness and truth, though we clearly see that it is not God's purpose to enlighten the world through the Church in its present humble position.

—Z. '06: 74, 75.

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What is it to live after the flesh? We answer, It is to live after, or in conformity to, and in gratification of, the inclinations and cravings of the fallen human nature. **And it is the easiest thing possible to do this.** All we have to do is just listlessly to abandon ourselves to the current of our old nature, and cease to strive against it. As soon as we do this, we begin to float down the stream, and by and by we find the current more and more rapid and resistance more and more difficult.—Z. '95: 8.

Only the Humble Shall Share the Kingdom

Matt. 18: 1-14. (Mark 9: 33-50; Luke 9: 46-50.)

"It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

THE subject of this lesson is one worthy of the most careful and prayerful consideration of every child of God. While the humility of the Lord's apostles is very marked in their subsequent career, in the beginning of their course they were all to some extent influenced by old ideas which it was the object of Christ's teaching gradually to eradicate.

After the peculiar experiences on the Mount of the Transfiguration and the selection by the Lord of three of their number for that notable occasion, the question of relative prominence in the Kingdom was naturally suggested to their minds, and apparently it led to a dispute which manifested some selfishness. It was to correct this disposition, and to show its antagonism to the spirit which must prevail in the Kingdom of God, that our Lord sought an opportunity to converse with them on the subject. (Verse 1 and Mark 9: 33, 34.) "And he came to Capernaum, and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace [certainly not indefinitely, for that would have been showing disrespect to the Master; but there was a brief silence which indicated some embarassment]; for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be greatest." By and by one of them inquired, "who is [to be] greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?" Then followed the lesson, so important to the apostles, who were subsequently to be specially exposed to great temptations to ambition and rivalry among themselves for the chief place in the estimation and in the hearts of the people of God—the Kingdom in embryo—among whom they were all to be leaders and teachers—chosen witnesses of God. And the Lord would have them be not only witnesses of his truth but exponents also of the power of his spirit in transforming the heart and moulding the character into graceful conformity to the divine will. But if the lesson was thus important to the apostles in their position as leaders, it is also important to the whole Church, all of whom are, to a greater or less extent, exposed to temptations to rivalry and ambition.

Verses 2-4; Mark 9: 35. "And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first [i.e., if he manifest the spirit of rivalry], the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." The spirit of rivalry being the very opposite of the spirit of love and meekness which much characterize all who shall be counted worthy of the Kingdom, this statement is seen to be the logical sequence of such a course; for if such a one shall ever enter the Kingdom he must first have that disposition thoroughly eradicated; and if it be deep seated or long cultivated, it may take considerable time and discipline to accomplish it, while, meantime, others, not so afflicted, may be engaged in the more rapid development of those graces of character and of mind which fit them more and more for extended usefulness and exalted service, thus necessarily leaving the one under discipline to be the last and least instead of the first and foremost. Thus viewed, the saying, He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; and he that exalteth himself shall be abased (Luke 14: 11), is seen to be the statement of a philosophical principle of divine law. Let us, therefore, as the Apostle Peter urges (1 Pet. 5: 6), humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us **in due time.**

"And he took a child and set him in the midst of them, and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Verily, I say unto you [the manner is impressive and solemn: it is as though he would say, I want you to take this lesson to heart and ponder it well], Except ye be converted [i.e., unless ye turn away entirely from this self-seeking spirit of rivalry], and become as little children, ye shall not [even] **enter** into [much less be **greatest in**] the Kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of heaven." The special characteristics of a little child are simplicity of heart, meekness, truthfulness, freedom from ambition and rivalry, faith, confiding trust, love, obedience, teachableness, indifference to social distinctions and popular opinions, and guilelessness.

The maintenance of such a spirit after the dormant powers of childhood have expanded and brought the world, with all its attractions, allurements, ambitions, hopes, etc., within the mental grasp of the man, after the intellect has been quickened by the pulsations of life until he begins to realize that he is the peer of his fellows, and that he has advanced in the acquirement of knowledge and the development of skill and ability even beyond many other men, is indeed the evidence of that self-control and self-discipline which invariably bespeak a noble character.

The possession of such a spirit indicates (1) That the man is not overestimating himself. Though, in comparison with the ignorance of his childhood, he may have made considerable progress in the acquirement of knowledge and the development of his faculties, perhaps beyond the majority of his fellow men, he sensibly considers that he is still only on the shore of a boundless sea of truth, and that if he has outstripped the speed of some of his fellows it is only because of some superior advantages of birth or education of which his benevolent soul would gladly see all men partakers. He views himself as God sees him—as a very imperfect man, striving in much weakness to measure up the standard of a perfect man, and realizing that his best efforts still leave him far short of the mark of perfection. And so he is humbled, in consideration of his failures, rather than puffed up, by comparing himself with those of still lower attainments.

(2) It indicates a tender consideration and love for other men which cannot vaunt itself or behave

unseemly toward them. It regards inferior learning and lack of intellectual development with that gracious sympathy and helpfulness which seek rather to supplement what the illiterate have, and to conceal their lack or deformity, than to expose their ignorance; while it cheerfully recognizes moral and intellectual equals, and pays due deference to superior attainments. It has nothing to do with the false standards of excellence which the world sets up, but, measuring self by the divine standards, it lives apart from, and far above, the spirit of the world—above its strifes, ambitions, bickerings, envies and selfishness; and, in the language of Paul, it has learned that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, to think on these things (Phil. 4:8), and not to think of self too highly, but to think **soberly**.—Rom. 12:3.

Such, our Lord declares, must be the spirit of all who will be permitted to enter into the Kingdom of heaven; and he who cultivates it most will be the greatest; not, however, by any arbitrary law of retribution, but on the philosophical principle that humility leads to greatness, and is of itself a great achievement. It is just such loving generosity and meekness as this that will be necessary on the part of the "royal priesthood" of the Millennial age, to co-operate with Christ in the great work of lifting up the fallen to the high privileges of perfect manhood.

Verse 5. "And whoso shall receive [recognize and show kindness to] one **such** little child [the least and humblest of God's children] in my name [because he is mine], receiveth me." That is the Lord's valuation of even the least and humblest. How it helps even the least of us to realize his love!

Verse 6. "But whosoever shall insnare [beguile and lead astray—from the truth, the spirit of the truth, or holiness of life] one of the least of these who believe in me, it would be better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were sunk in the depth of the sea."

Such a warning needs no comment: if any one should find in his own heart the least intimation of such a disposition, let him quickly halt in his erring way and earnestly pray God to renew a right spirit within him.

Verse 7. "Woe ["great tribulation"—"a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation"—is coming] unto the world because of [wilful] offences [offences against sufficiency of light to avoid them]; for it must needs be that offences come [because men's hearts are not right], but woe to that man [that wilful sinner] by whom the offence cometh."

Verse 10. "Take heed that ye despise not [that ye do not hate or in any way persecute] one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." ("Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them that shall be the heirs of salvation?") And (verse 14), "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." The intimation is plain that any persecution or ensnarement of these will surely be observed by the Lord, and the evil-doers will in due time be brought to justice. Though the Lord may permit persecutions to severely try his saints, it shall only accomplish their purification; for "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Verses 11-13 tell of the loving zeal of our good Shepherd in seeking and caring for his sheep. Let us rejoice in his care and diligently hearken to his voice.—Z. '95:33, 34.

◆

Human nature is much the same in all ages and in all places; it esteems that which is distant as grander, more wonderful than that which is near. We have all seen the same fact illustrated under various circumstances. The poet, the philosopher, the teacher, the talented, are not first recognized at home. How little those who heard our Lord realized the privileges they enjoyed—that the very Son of God was amongst them, that the Teacher of Teachers was addressing them, that the special Ambassador was in their midst. To a limited extent the same thing has been true throughout the Gospel Age, for the Lord's consecrated people have been all the way down his representatives, as he said, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me." The Apostle reminds us along these lines that "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not." The world recognizes not the Lord's humble saints as being the children of the Highest, "Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together."—Rom. 8:17.

Some one has remarked, "When a hero or a saint is seen to eat and drink, live and dress, like an ordinary man, weak where some are strong, ignorant of some things that others know, it is almost impossible to look over these things and recognize the hero or saint." It is the ability to look over these things and to appreciate their relationship to the Lord that enables the Lord's consecrated people to recognize themselves and each other as members of the Royal Priesthood. It is the ability to see things thus from the divine standpoint, being "taught of God" to recognize each other by the heart, the will, the intention, but not acording to the flesh with its weaknesses and blemishes. Such a correct view from the Lord's standpoint is necessary before we can "love as brethren," and have this love of the brethren as one of the evidences that we have passed from death unto life—that we have been begotten again as new creatures in Christ Jesus. —Z. '05:28.

◆

Brethren, let us watch and pray, in the congregations of the saints and in private, **more zealously than ever,** as we approach the dark hour of earth's great trial. No other ground is safe. This has the Master's approval and example.—Z. '01:310.

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The Apostle makes very clear to us that our Lord, the Head, communicates with the members of his body by using certain of their own number as his representatives—so that one member may serve the body as an eye, another as an ear, another as a mouth. (1 Cor. 12: 12-31.) Nevertheless, we must always consider the headship of the Lord; and the provision which he makes for the body is what in every instance is to be sought, and not what men may scheme or do in self-exaltation and as would-be teachers in the body of Christ.—Z. '01: 228, 229.

◇

The saints taught of God, clearly see that now is not the time for restitution, but still the time for sacrificing.—Z. '02: 375.

◇

Our Lord intimates that a life of carefulness respecting not only our actions but also our words and even our very thoughts (which are the springs from whence proceed our words and actions) will be a very "narrow way"—a difficult way. And yet it is the only way by which we can hope to enter into the life and Kingdom of joys which are now set before us in the Gospel call.—Z. '00: 75.

◇

Let us never forget the importance of furnishing an opportunity for each consecrated Brother and Sister to participate in the Class Studies and in the testimonies. "If thou believe in thine heart and confess with thy mouth" is the Lord's suggestion of proper faithfulness. It is those who are thus faithful who usually reap the greatest blessing.
—Z. '15: 162.

◇

Those who have the mind of Christ are never persecutors: they feel it to be their bounden duty not to co-operate, not to assist, things which they believe to be wrong; they may even find it necessary or expedient to denounce the wrong, and to show up its inconsistencies; and in some instances to name the active agents in these wrong teachings and wrong doings—as the Apostles have done on several occasions in their writings. But as for persecuting others, the Lord's people can take no part in this; we are hindered by the spirit of love, the mind of Christ, which directs that we should do unto others as we would they should do unto us—our Golden Rule, our "perfect law of liberty."—Z. '02: 103-104.

◇

It is well indeed that wise, true leaders should be appreciated and acknowledged and followed; but it is a lesson that all need to learn, that the Lord is the real leader and commander of all those who claim to be his people; and that while looking to leaders of ability for guidance and for help, all of the Lord's people need to look beyond the leader also to the Lord; and to have their senses exercised in respect to the righteousness, the justice, the truthfulness, of the advice and example of their leaders.
—Z. '02: 39.

We know not what is for our highest welfare. Sometimes those things which we crave and desire to grasp, considering them to be good, might really be to our disadvantage. Blessed are they who are able by faith to pierce the gloom of every trial and difficulty and perplexity, and to realize that "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and that he is causing all things to work together for their good. So it was with the apostles: their disappointment became a channel of blessed instruction.—Z. '01: 148.

◇

Speaking of the Church class, dead to the world, and judged by the world as though they were men, but alive toward God, and judged by God as New Creatures, spirit beings merely sojourning in these fleshly bodies, as in a tent, and waiting in this wilderness condition to learn the lessons necesary before entering the land of Promise, the heavenly Caanan, by sharing the First Resurrection, the Apostle proceeds to point out that these, when they **speak**, should be as "God's oracles," absolutely truthful, **wholly reliable**. If they **serve** they should do it with all the ability which they possess, recognizing that the ability is Godgiven as well as the talent.—Z. '03: 365.

◇

The lesson for us to learn is that the work which the Father has given us to do is not a work of convincing the world of showing his favor toward us and our greatness in him, but rather—"Hast thou faith, have it to thyself," as the Apostle says. Rather that we should quietly and humbly, yet as effectively as reason and propriety will permit, let our lights shine.—Z. '04: 9.

◇

A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, is always made glad by evidences of God's grace operating in himself and in others.—Z. '02 :124.

◇

We are frequently charged by those who, from blindness or other reasons, would disparage the glorious Gospel of the Kingdom, that those "of this way" are seeking selfishly for the glory and honor and immortality of the Kingdom as something superior to what others will receive at the Lord's hand. This as a whole is an unfair and an unjust charge, for as far as we know the majority of those who are interested in "Present Truth" are not so much ambitious for the dignities of the Kingdom as they are for any place in that great marriage feast, any membership in the glorious Bride company, any opportunity to share with the heavenly Bridegroom in the great and wonderful work of blessing all the families of the earth. It would not occur to any of us to think of ourselves in connection with such high honors and dignities, glory and immortality, except as we find it plainly stated in the divine Word, but finding it there, it is the duty of faith to accept whatever we may be deemed worthy of, and to allow it to work in us to will and to do the Lord's good pleasure, as he intended.—Z. '06: 248.

Well do the Scriptures generally enforce the importance of guarding the mind, the will, the heart, saying, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Keeping it, to the saints now called, means life more abundant, with glory, honor and immortality. Neglecting it, refusing to exercise self-control, means the permission of selfish desires to be conceived in our brains, and to lead away from the Lord and his "narrow way" on toward sin, on toward the wages of sin—death—Second Death.—Z. '01: 326.

◆

Above all others, then, we should be sober. When the Apostle enjoins, "Be sober," he is not referring to the use of intoxicating liquors: for those who have the Lord's Spirit, the Lord's mind—the Truth—do not so indulge. Neither would we understand him to mean that we should always go about wearing long faces: for the children of the Light should of all others be happy, cheerful people. But we should be sober in the sense of being of serious mind, thoughtful, not given to frivolity or levity, but earnestly watching our thoughts, our words, our doings, that we may in all things bring honor to our King whose name we bear.—Z. '15: 54.

◆

The Lamb's Book of Life we must understand to include those, and only those, who attain to position of joint-heirship with Christ, whose names are written in heaven during this age, and who are faithful to their covenant. What a glorious incentive we have here to faithfulness! What a warning against the slightest sympathy with anything unclean, untrue, or in anywise contrary to the divine standard of holiness! If we appreciate the glorious things of the divine provision for the Church and for the world, these promises and offers will have their influence upon us, and under their influence we are expected to keep our garments unspotted from the world; to be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; to hate every contamination of the flesh upon our robe of righteousness; and to seek immediately in prayer for the removal of any spot or wrinkle or any such thing from our wedding garment,—that thus we may abide in the Lord's love, and in the due time be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."—Z. '01: 202.

◆

We may be sure that it was not of accident that the Apostle wrote respecting the wisdom from above, "first pure." Our own purity in the sense of our justification by faith, comes before we can have any standing or relationship with the Lord or be begotten into his family; and this same purity which is made the foundation of the new life, and given to us reckonedly, must be appreciated by us and lived up to as closely as possible. And the clearer view we get as to what constitutes impurity in the Lord's sight, the better will we be able so to regulate and govern our mortal bodies, our acts, our words, our very thoughts, as to bring them into as close conformity to the will of God as possible.—Z. '02: 218.

◆

Let us, dearly beloved, as we realize that thus far God has counted us worthy to look upon the scroll of his plan which has been unsealed for us by our blessed Lord Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, prove our worthiness to continue to look therein and to read the wondrous things of his law, by faithful obedience and loyalty to it in all things. Let us not undervalue our great privilege in being counted worthy to suffer some reproach and some hardness as good soldiers for the truth's sake; and also in being counted worthy to have some part in the blessed ministry of reflecting the light of divine truth; let us prove ourselves jewels of rarest value, diamonds indeed, heartily receiving and beautifully transmitting to others the light of truth, and faithfully enduring the severest pressure that God may permit to come upon us; for, if faithful in these small things we shall in due time be counted worthy also to reign with Christ in power and great glory.
—Z. '02: 333.

◆

Our trials and difficulties are not to be esteemed as the results of divine carelessness in respect to our interests, but as the outworkings of divine providence for our good. Those who are able to view the matter from this standpoint are thus enabled to learn some of the very best and most helpful of life's lessons, and are thereby prepared for the glorious things coming; whereas those who allow faith to falter in times of trial, and who will walk with the Lord and have confidence in him only when they are the recipients of miraculous favors, are correspondingly weak, and correspondingly unprepared for the Kingdom.—Z. '02: 137.

◆

"Make no provision of the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." Ah, yes! how often the Lord's people have made a mistake on this point. Although the heart, the new mind, be thoroughly consecrated to the Lord, we still have the fleshly bodies and they still have their natural appetites and these call out loudly to us that they should not be ignored. They insist upon their rights, etc.; but the Apostle instructs us that having started to walk after the spirit, as new creatures, we should make no provision for gratifying the flesh:—we should not shape our affairs so as to yield to any of the demands of the flesh which we recognize to be contrary to the will of the Lord. In proportion as we yield to the improper desires of the flesh, in that same proportion the flesh will prosper and the spiritual new nature will languish. In proportion as we deny all the illegitimate appetites of the flesh and mortify them, put them to death, in that same proportion will we grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. As the Apostle again says, "The flesh lusteth (desireth) against the spirit (the new will or mind) and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5: 17. Z. '02: 190.

◆

Let all whose eyes are open, all who see where we are and what is coming, be alert first for themselves that they may be of the "brethren" who will see and be delivered, by giving the more earnest heed to the things which God has shown us, lest we let them slip; and secondly, for all who give any evidence of being "brethren," to assist them as much as lieth in us.—Z. '01: 292.

Old Corn Gems

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I Am My Beloved's

Thy spirit, Lord, has filled my life
  With sweetness and with love intense.
I love to live to do thy will,
  Until thou'rt pleased to call me hence.

I love to sit at thy dear feet,
  And learn of thee thy will, thy mind.
And thou dost teach me lessons sweet,
  And learning these, great peace I find.

Thou'rt ever ready to bestow
  A blessing fresh, so rich and rare;
And as we're filled with thy great love,
  To that extent all things seem fair.

The sweetest portion of my days
  Is spent just here, low at thy feet.
Words fail to tell how deep the joy.
  The hour is holy when we meet.

How gladly will I hail the day
  When I shall see thee as thou art,
And be made like thee, precious One,
  And of thy glory share a part.—Z. '93:71.

What is the End of Life?

THE END OF LIFE is not to do good, although so many of us think so. It is not to win souls—**The end of life is—to do the will of God.** . . .

If we could have no ambition past the will of God, our lives would be successful. If we could say, "I have no ambition to go to the heathen; I have no ambition to win souls; my ambition is to do the will of God, whatever that may be," that **would make all lives equally great or equally small,** because the only great thing in a life is what of God's will there is in it. **The maximum achievement** of any man's life, after it is all over, **is to have done the will of God.** . . .

The supreme principle upon which we have to run our lives is to adhere, through good report and ill, through temptation and prosperity and adversity, **to the will of God, wherever that may lead us.** . . .

The highest service is first, moment by moment, to be in the will of God. It may be to work or to wait; to **stand fast** or to lay still. 'Tis he, our blessed Lord, who will keep us in his will, if our eyes are fixed on him.

How can you build up a life on that principle? Let me give you an outline of a little Bible reading:

The definition of an ideal life:

Acts 13:22—**"A man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will."**

The object of life:

Heb. 10:7—**"I come to do thy will, O God."**

The first thing you need after life, is food:

John 4:34—**"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."**

The next thing you need after food is society:

Mark 3:35—**"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."**

You want education:

Psa. 143:10—**"Teach me to do thy will, O my God."**

You want pleasure:

Psa. 40:8—**"I delight to do thy will, O my God."**

A whole life can be built up on that vertebral column, and then, when all is over,

1 John 2:17—**"He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."** Z. '00:275.

GENERAL CONVENTION

Vancouver, B.C., Saturday, Sunday and Monday, September 4th, 5th and 6th, in the Upper Dominion Hall, 339 Pender Street, W. The Local Ecclesia will provide two meals each day. Reception Committee will meet boats and trains. For further information please apply to Brother Geo. H. Biddle, 816 12th Avenue West, Vancouver, B.C., Telephone Fairmont 3443, Secretary of Convention.

All Standfast Bible Students cordially invited to attend.

It is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly and hence we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err rather on the side of too great sympathy and leniency than on the side of too strong condemnation. Z. '05:118.

◆

Let us prize the Truth above riches or honor of men—yea, above life itself; so shall we be true disciples, followers of him who is the truth, and who prayed for us saying, "Sanctify them through thy Truth, Thy Word is Truth." Z. '05:142.

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OLD CORN GEMS

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"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"Where a brother gives an interpretation of a Scripture which differs from that given by Brother Russell, and Brother Russell's interpretation seems reasonable and in harmony with the plan of God, then we believe it a safe rule to follow Brother Russell's interpretation, for the reason that he is the servant of the Church, so constituted by the Lord for the Laodicean period; and therefore we should expect the Lord to teach us through Him. Where there arises a doubt in the mind as to which interpretation is correct, then it is always safer to resolve that doubt in favor of Brother Russell's interpretation. We believe such to be in harmony with the Lord's will. Z. '18: 51.

The Battle of Temptation

Matthew 4: 1-11.

Golden Text:—"In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. 4:15.

WITH sin came selfishness—indeed "original sin" sprang from selfishness, which has marked its development at every step for now six thousand years. Selfishness is the mainspring of a battle not only against benevolence and righteousness but against everything that stands in its ambitious way. It has led to all the conflicts of the world, both personal and national. While it is evil and only evil in itself, it may, under God's providences, serve a useful purpose in the development of character. As God stands for every principle of goodness, righteousness, mercy and truth, Satan stands for or represents all the adverse principles of sin, covetousness, injustice, untruthfulness, unprinciple, selfishness in its every form. **Sooner or later each individual esteemed worthy of divine favor and life must be tested along this line of principle—faithfulness to God and the principles of righteousness against lack of principle, selfishness.**

The apostles record the temptation of Jesus along the line of selfishness, after his anointing with the holy Spirit. Doubtless as a child and as a young man he had temptations along this line such as are common to others, and doubtless his perfection of being made this as nothing, so inwrought must love have been in the very constitution of a perfect being such as he was. It may surprise some that his temptation could be as great, yea, much greater, after the anointing of the Spirit. This, however, was the case. Moreover, it is well to remember that our Golden Text, "Tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin," does not refer to the ordinary temptations experienced by our Lord in common with others before his anointing. It was our Lord's trials, temptations and victories as a New Creature that constituted him the Captain of our Salvation and our pattern—"Tempted in all points like as we [new creatures] are."

Led by the Spirit Into Temptation

We should never voluntarily go into temptation. Reverence, humility and caution should deter us. We should have such a realization of our own imperfection that we would seek to avoid temptation and pass by on the other side. Nevertheless, when temptations do come to us we should be of good courage, remembering that greater is he who is for us than all they that be against us, that he has promised never to leave or forsake us, and that his strength shall be perfected in our weakness if we will by faith accept of his aid.

We must not expect to escape temptations, trials, difficulties, perplexities, because only through these can we be perfected in character. Only the tried ones could ever be declared overcomers. Sin, error, is all about us, and presented to us not only by the world and Satan but also by the attitudes of our own flesh. If we be without trials, without temptations, without difficulties, we may be sure that we will never be overcomers and never receive the crown of glory and joint-heirship with our Lord, the Head, the Captain, the Leader of the overcomers. We are not forgetting the request of the model prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." But for the foregoing reasons we incline to prefer the rendering of this verse as given in the Emphatic Diaglott, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the Evil one." As our Lord declared, "It must needs be that offences [trials] come."

Our Lord was led by his own spirit, his own mind, to go into the wilderness and thus indirectly into trials and difficulties there experienced. So it is with the Lord's followers. It is through their holy minds or dispositions, the result of their full consecration to the Lord and their reception of the begetting of his Spirit, that they, too, are led into temptations, trials, difficulties similar to those which our Lord experienced.

Tempted Forty Days

The account in our lesson speaks of our Lord's temptation as occurring at the close of his forty days in the wilderness, but Mark and Luke in referring to the same forty days imply that our Lord was tempted for the entire period. Both thoughts are evidently correct: he was tempted during the forty days, tested, tried as respects his own mind, his own disposition to do the Father's will, while the temptation narrated in our lesson, which occurred at the close of the forty days, was a special conflict with Satan—Diabolus. And we here remark that this name Diabolus is always in the Greek used in the singular number, evidently referring to Satan, the prince of demons. The matter is confused before the mind of the English reader by the fact that our common version Bible uses the word devils, in the plural, whereas the Greek in such places is a totally different word, signifying demons. . . .

"About My Father's Business"

Some things our Lord knew most distinctly, other things had not yet been revealed to him by the Father. Even as the boy of twelve we find that he knew that he had proceeded forth and came from God, that he had come into the world on a special mission, and that he must be about his Father's business. Learning that he could not enter upon the Father's business, "the work thou gavest me to do," until he was thirty years of age, he patiently awaited the time and hid his identity and contented himself with being a faithful son in the humble sphere in which divine providence had placed him. But just as soon as he had reached the appointed age he hastened to make his covenant with God, symbolized by his baptism—namely, a full consecration of his every talent and power to do the Father's will even unto death. At the time noted by our lesson he had done this and had received the anointing and filling of the holy Spirit. He now stood at the threshold of his great work, and realizing its importance and that now it was due time for him to understand the divine plan which he was to execute, that he might do it thoroughly and in full accord with the divine will he sought the wilderness, that in solitude he might know thoroughly the proper course for him to take in announcing himself as Messiah to Israel and the world.

Worthy the Lamb Slain

Symbolically our Lord shows that it was not possible for him to know the completeness of the divine plan until after he had demonstrated his worthiness to be the heir of all things, and until that worthiness was proven by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. In the symbols of Revelation he points this out to us, showing how the divine plan had long been in the Father's hand a sealed scroll, and how that no one in heaven or earth had been found worthy to open that book or scroll or to understand the particulars of the divine program until he, as the anti-typical Lamb of God, had been slain, and by his sacrifice had demonstrated his worthiness to receive wisdom, honor, dominion and might. Then to him was the scroll or book of the divine plan entrusted in its every detail, that in due time all the wonderful provisions of the divine plan might be fully executed in the glorification of the Church and the blessing of all the families of the earth.—See Revelation 5.

Those forty days, we may safely assume, were spent in meditation and prayer, our Lord being led to this course by his spirit of devotion to the Father, his anxiety to do the Father's will in the Father's way. He had neither Bible nor concordances nor other assistance in the study of the divine predictions, but he had instead the perfect memory and the eighteen years of hearing the reading of the Law in the Synagogue. We may safely say that he knew the entire Word of God by heart. He had known it for some time, and not only had exercised his own thought upon it but had also inquired of the most learned their views. He evidently realized that it was not due time for him to have a clear and full understanding of the prophecies until he had received the holy Spirit—that the divine revelations were only intended to be understood by those enlightened by the holy Spirit. He therefore now expected and doubtless realized newer and clearer views of the subjects he had been studying from childhood respecting his personal mission and the manner in which it was to be executed, as foretold in the shadows of the Law and in the veiled testimonies of the prophets.

"Teach Me Thy Will, O God"

In fancy we may see our Lord meditating upon how he was to be the Mediator of a new Covenant, the antitype of Moses, who mediated the Law Covenant. In our minds we may with him watch the procedure of the going up into the mountain, the receiving of the commission and the preaching of it to the people under a vail, and how this transaction not only represented a first advent but a second advent in glory. We may presume that he studied carefully the type of the sin offerings, the Day of Atonement sacrifices, by which propitiation for the sins of the world was to be accomplished.

We may in our mind's eye see him unravelling the symbol of the typical Jubilee year and noting the blessings of the Millennial age which shall ultimately come to all who should become the Lord's people through him.

We see him studying the type of the Israelites bitten by the serpents in the wilderness of Sin, and how their looking with faith upon the brazen serpent was the cure.

We may see him endeavoring to apply this to himself as the antitype who should be made sin, treated as the sinner in the interest of the sin-smitten ones.

We may see him wrestling with the prophetic statements of Isaiah respecting the one who would be led as a lamb to the slaughter; how he should be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and that the people of Israel would be ashamed of him and hide as it were their faces from him, giving him no support, no assistance or co-operation in the work he had come to do; how the Lord would lay on him the iniquity of us all, that by his stripes we might be healed.

We see him wrestling with the statements made by the prophet Daniel, some of which were in process of fulfilment and therefore to be understood; others sealed by God and impossible to be understood by any—waiting times and seasons which the Father had put in his own power, of which neither the Son nor the angels of heaven, any more than others were informed.

We see him studying the symbolical representations of the establishment of the Kingdom of heaven at the close of a certain period of the world's history, and how it would be with power and great glory; how previously Messiah would be cut off, not for his own sins but for the sins of the people, and how he would seal up the testimony, anoint the most holy, etc., etc.

Our Lord's Earnestness

These studies—interspersed, we may be sure, with prayer—seemingly occupied our Lord's attention so completely, so fully, so thoroughly for those forty days that he had no thought for anything else. We may infer that he neither ate nor slept, for the record is that at the close of the forty days he afterward hungered. So intent was his perfect mind upon the great subject with which he wrestled that it absorbed all of his vitality, energy, in this effort to know the Father's will in order that he might do it. We can very readily suppose, too, that he experienced various temptations during these forty days of study; that although he was separate from sinners and all sinful thoughts or ambitions, nevertheless it would be quite a test to his loyalty of purpose to so interpret the Scriptures as to see in them the great sufferings, trials and disappointments which he afterward experienced. Continually there would be the opportunity of taking a different view of the matter—the opportunity of construing the course outlined for him another way than that which would mean so much of degradation and dishonor to the One despised and rejected of men even unto death, even the death of the cross.

"Study to Show Thyself Approved"

There is a great lesson in all of this for all of the Lord's followers. If it was the wise and proper course for the Master to go aside for the study of the divine plan before beginning his public ministry, how much more should his followers feel it incumbent upon them as fallen beings with imperfect judgments to seek counsel of the Lord's Word and Spirit to ascertain what the Lord would have them do before beginning any work. If this course were more generally followed there would be far less ranting done in the name of the Lord, fewer would feel that it was their privilege to rush in and work for the Lord without first studying carefully the divine will or program respecting that work—lest they should be hinderers of the Lord's plan which they desire to serve. . . .

The Tempter Came to Him

At the close of the forty days of personal, earnest study, and when our Lord had reached a conclusion respecting the divine program as outlined through the Law and the prophets, and when in doing so he was exhausted in mind and in body, then the tempter came, the representative of all subtlety, a liar from the beginning. As the Lord's followers we can from experience say that this is the Adversary's general course—to intrude himself and his temptations at the opportune moment of our greatest weakness. While busily engaged in searching for the Father's will our Lord was not molested by the tempter, but as soon as he had digested the subject and reached a conclusion, and while his perfect but overtaxed human powers needed and sought refreshment, recuperation, that was the moment of the tempter's assault. Let us remember that it is the same with us who are his footstep followers, how he was tempted in all points like as we are.

We have found some of the Lord's faithful people surprised at first because they had so few trials, and we have always admonished such to use such a period of rest for study, for putting on the whole armor of God, that they may be able to stand when the assault shall surely come later on. Apparently the Lord's providences safeguard us at the very beginning of our experiences until we have sufficient opportunity for reaching a firm and definite conclusion in our own minds respecting his will, as presented to us in his Word. Whoever fails to use this period faithfully, earnestly, will find himself so much the weaker, so much the more liable to defeat, when the testings from the Adversary come a little later. It is also to be noted that these peculiar trials and temptations which come to us as the Lord's followers do not reach us until after we have attained the point of full consecration to the Lord. Neither do we have the privilege of coming to a clearer appreciation of the teaching of the Word until after such a consecration.

"As An Angel of Light"

The account does not say and we therefore cannot know whether Satan appeared to our Lord personally or not. The fact that he was tempted in all points like as we [his brethren] are seems to imply that Satan did not appear to him personally, because he does not so appear to us in connection with our temptations. We may be sure, however, if there were any personal appearance it would be that of an angel of light, and not at all as Satan is vulgarly pictured, with hoofs, horns, etc. If Satan were to present himself in any vulgar form to any in harmony with the Lord, the effect would be to at once disarm the temptation. We may be sure, therefore, that Satan would adopt no such course at any time.

The Apostle puts us on our guard, that rather we are to expect the Adversary's temptations along the line of an angel of light—a minister of the Truth. He always affects to be a helper and not a hinderer of the Lord's people. He would show them how to get along in the world much more smoothly and more happily; he would bless them; he would turn their narrow, rugged path into a path of roses; he would be their friend, their counsellor, their guide. Only after they had followed him awhile would they find, when well under his power, that he is a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the Truth. . . .

"Like as We Are"

Not like as the world was our Lord tempted, not like as we are tempted as natural men and women, but like as we are tempted who have become new creatures in Christ through a full consecration of our hearts, based upon our justification through his blood. Our Lord's temptations correspond to the temptations of this class only.

Our temptations are from three different quarters, well represented in the three tests put to our Lord by Diabolus. First the flesh, second the world, third the adversary himself. All of our Lord's trials as a New Creature were from these three quarters, and all of the trials of his followers as New Creatures are from the same. Let us, while following our Lord's experiences, apply the same to ourselves.

Temptation First—The Flesh

Self-gratification is to some extent proper, but there are limitations. Those who are consecrated to the Lord may not seek to gratify themselves, their appetites, in any manner contrary to the divine arrangement—to do so would be sin. This rule applied to our Lord as well as to all his followers. After his forty days' fast he was very hungry, and the tempter's suggestion to him was that of a friend. Jesus was reminded that he was the Son of God, that he had every right to all the favors of God, that his hunger was a legitimate craving of nature, that there was nothing sinful in being hungry, and that he had therefore the right, the privilege, to reasonably gratify his appetite. All this was true. The next suggestion was, You have the power—you have just received the anointing of the holy Spirit—you may therefore at your pleasure command these stones and they would turn to bread; power to do this is vested in you by God. Use that power now for the supply of your needs. Why should you hunger? Take counsel of a friend, appreciate my interest in you; if I were an enemy I would prefer to see you starve to death or at least prefer to see you suffer.

How insidious was this temptation! It had in it many elements of truth, and apparently was kindly and well meant. There was just the one flaw which our Lord's keen mind at once discerned, and his loyal heart at once repudiated the advice. He reasoned, This Holy Spirit, this power I have received in my anointing, was not intended to be used for self gratification: it was my begetting of the Spirit as a New Creature, to the intent that as a great High Priest I might lay down my life, might sacrifice myself as a human being. If now I should use this holy power, which was given me for the purpose of sacrificing, in an opposite direction, to heal, restore, to strengthen the mortal body which I have just delivered to death, it would be wrong—it would be using the power of God in an opposite direction from the divine intention. However hungry I feel I cannot do this. My life is in my Father's hands. I have been here these forty days under the guidance of the holy Spirit, seeking to know and to do the Father's will, I have not forfeited my life by disobedience. I may therefore conclude that while I am thus about my Father's business naught shall harm my Father's child. Hence I conclude that my hunger will not prove really injurious to me. My answer to this temptation of the Adversary will not impugn his motives in mentioning it, for that would be unkind and needless. My reply is: Bread is not the only thing by which man shall live; every word of God is a word of life. I have been feeding upon this heavenly food, I am strong in my spirit, in my determination to do my Father's will. I will not use improper means for my refreshment of body. The Father will be able to make up to me whatever disadvantage may accrue through my faithfulness to him. His will be done in me.

Spiritual Privileges Not For Selfish Uses

How are the Lord's followers tempted as he was in this respect? We have no power to turn stones into bread. No! But having received the holy Spirit, it is within the range of our opportunities to use the same contrary to our consecration, to use it for our physical benefit—for instance, to make merchandise of the Gospel, to preach that which would be pleasing to the natural man and bring us worldly applause and approval and wealth and social caste, etc. This would be selling our birthright for the mess of pottage. Those who see the matter in its true light, those who are in the right attitude of heart to appreciate the matter, will not do this but will say, Natural food alone will not sustain us. We cannot live except as we have the smile, the favor, the approval of the Lord our God. To live without that would not be living for us.

Another temptation coming to some of the Lord's consecrated ones along this line would seem to be in the teaching that to some extent prevails, that they should go to God with every ailment and pain and thus use their privileges as anointed members of the body of Christ for the healing of their mortal bodies, which they have already in consecration surrendered to death. Would this be right? Would it not be along the same lines as our Lord's temptation to use the privileges and opportunities and powers that were his as the anointed one to comfort, strengthen and upbuild his mortal body? We believe that the cases are analogous, and that it is highly improper for any of the Lord's people who have received of his Spirit, who have made a consecration of their lives, to ask for any special intervention of the Lord's power on their behalf, to attempt in any manner to use their privileges as members of the Royal Priesthood to minister to their flesh.

On the contrary, so far as their fallen flesh is concerned, they have all the rights and privileges of the whole world to food and raiment and anything that in the Lord's providence may come to their attention as being healthful, strengthening, call this food or call it medicine as we please. It is our holy Spirit privileges as Royal Priests that cannot be invoked for earthly advantage, because this relationship to our Lord was not granted us for such a purpose, but rather that under this holy Spirit relationship we might the more efficiently lay down our lives for the brethren. It is in vain that some reason that they merely desire physical health that they may better perform their sacrifices to the Lord. The

Scriptures declare that obedience is better than sacrifice.

Let us accept such temporal, physical blessings and mercies as divine providence grants us with gratitude, with thankfulness, and let our holy spirits, our holy minds, intentions, so use our mortal bodies as to make the best use possible of our talents, opportunities, and conditions for the service of the Lord, not asking for resuscitation or special strength as our Lord did not, but accepting such favors as the Father might grant to us unsolicited—"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." "After all these things [food, raiment, health, etc.] do the Gentiles seek." Matt. 6:8, 32.

Temptation the Second—the World

Satan did not stop to argue the question: **he saw that it would be useless as soon as he perceived that the Lord's stand had been firmly taken.** And so we also have the promise, "Resist the tempter and he will flee from you."—Jas. 4:7.

But although Satan fled, desisted from the first temptation, he speedily brought another, still in a friendly manner. Paraphrased, his proposition was this: "I carry you in mind to the roof of the southern wing of the Temple, which overlooks the valley of Hinnom [Gehenna]. A leap from that altitude would attract the attention of all the people, especially the most religious class, if done at the hour of the day when large crowds gather in the Temple. It would be a wonderful way of announcing your mission and showing at the same time the divine power which is in you. And there is a Scripture which implies that this was to be the way you would make an announcement of your Messiahship. It reads, 'He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.' (Psa. 91:11, 12.) This Scripture would undoubtedly be fulfilled by the leap I am suggesting, and the people, realizing its fulfilment, would apply the Scripture directly to you and would all give attention to you as Messiah. They would all as a whole become your followers, and your mission would be thoroughly launched in one day." Longfellow practically pictures the scene:

"Unto the holy Temple on Moriah,
With its resplendent domes and manifold
Bright pinnacles of gold.
Where they wait thy coming, O Messiah!
Lo, I have brought thee! Let thy glory here
Be manifest and clear.

"Reveal thyself by royal act and gesture
Descending with the bright triumphant host
Of all the highermost
Archangels, and about thee as a vesture
The shining clouds and all thy splendors show
Unto the world below."

Again the suggestion had the appearance of being a friendly one. Could it be that Satan was really interested in the Lord's mission? Could it be that whereas he had been the tempter at first he was now sincerely desirous of undoing his work and becoming a co-laborer with and a helper of the Lord Jesus in his mission? Would it not be a great item in itself to gain first of all the great tempter who had misled so many, and, by converting him, to begin the work with his co-operation? And were not his words wise? Would it not provoke a general comment all through Palestine, and awaken the people to a realization of the power of God in their midst in the person of Jesus?

Thou Shalt Not Tempt God

All of these thoughts and many more doubtless came to our Lord in connection with the tempter's suggestion. But his study of the divine plan during those forty days, and the conclusions he there reached, quickly settled our Lord's decision that he could not take such a course, that it would not be consistent with the divine plan which he saw outlined in the Law and the prophets, and that anyway such a procedure would not be according to proper lines, reasonable conduct; that in thus leaping from the Temple parapet he would in a measure be tempting God by going contrary to the established law of gravitation. He could readily see that if in the performance of some obligation, some duty, he should miss his footing and fall from the Temple, that the Lord would be able to protect him, that he would receive no injury; but it would be quite another matter for him to adopt a plan for serving God that was contrary to what he recognized to be a law of nature. Not by merely curious wonder-working was he to be known to the people, but by the working of the works of him who sent him; by giving illustrations, in the healing of the sick and the blind and the lame, of the great work of God in restitution which would be accomplished through him later, during the Millennial age. The Adversary had no more to say, it would have been useless; he left him so far as that temptation was concerned.

Have the followers of Jesus temptations along this line?

Yes, we answer. The world continually looks to those who confess their relationship to the Lord as sons and who profess to have received the spirit of adoption, and urges them to show or attempt to show some marvel in his favor, if they would prove that they are specially the Lord's children.

"This Generation Seeketh a Sign,"

said our Lord, and thus it is with every generation, every people—the whole world. The world wants miracles or outward show of sanctity and great professions. Some responding to this spirit of the world have adopted peculiar dress. Monks, nuns, quakers, and others make profession of wonderful powers received through laying on of hands, and would thus impress the world along worldly lines. Others claim the power by magic words to change the bread and wine into the actual body of Christ, and authority then to sacrifice him. We cannot suppose that sane people really believe that they do anything of the kind; we must suppose that they do it for a spectacular effect upon the world. Similarly the red and purple and gold and white and black robes, miters, not now enjoined.

The world seeks after signs of healing, wonder-working magic, etc., and the nearer the Lord's people approach to these things the more they may expect to influence the world. Romanists are leaders along these lines, and have relics of saints, garments, bones, etc., to which reverence is attached in the minds of all classes except in the most civilized lands. Many of these things are attempted also by the Mormons, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, and magnetic healers, and there is a general tendency amongst all denominations to attempt something of the spectacular whereby to arrest and fix the attention of the public.

As our Lord avoided anything and everything spectacular so should also his followers. True, our Lord performed some miracles of healing, but we should remember that the numbers healed as compared with the whole number of the people was comparatively small. We should remember also that these were the foretold witnesses by which he should be recognized, that they were foreshadowings of his coming glorious work of restitution to all the families of the earth, which shall be accomplished in due time during the Millennial age. True, also, there were miraculous gifts and tongues in the early Church, which we see through the Apostle's statement were designed for the establishment of the Church until the work of grace should more thoroughly be developed in the hearts of the Lord's people, when the fruits of the Spirit should and did supplant the miraculous gifts of the Spirit.

The Lord's people should be on guard against any unreasonable procedures in the proclamation of the Gospel. The service of ambassadors for God is a reasonable service, and those who are in proper line in the footsteps of Jesus will be found to possess more and more of the "spirit of a sound mind." —2 Tim. 1:7.

Misapplication of Scriptures

Note in connection with this temptation of our Lord that the Adversary quoted Scripture in support of his position, and that our Lord met the temptation not only upon reasonable, logical grounds, but with the Scriptures also. The lesson in this is that we not only need to have the Bible in our possession and be able to read it, but we also need the guidance of the holy Spirit, the spirit of a sound mind, in our application of the Word to the affairs of life. Our Lord did not dispute that the Father could give the angels a charge over him to bear up his feet, to preserve him from injury, but he did reason correctly and in harmony with the Word that it would be wrong for him to tempt the Lord, to try the Lord, to test the Lord's ability. Instead of proving the Lord and having him co-operate with a wonder-working spirit, we should the more carefully investigate the teachings of the divine plan, to ascertain and follow the course marked out for us in the Lord's providences, our reasonable service, even to the extent of the using up of our mortal bodies in reasonable methods, in the promulgation of the Truth.

In the light of the unfolding of God's plan we see that the living members of the Church constitute the feet of the body of Christ—the last members. We see further that in the prophecy which Satan quoted reference is had to the serious difficulties and trials of our day which would precede the feet members. "The hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." —Rev. 3:10.

We see that in our day there is a stumbling-stone permitted for the testing of our faith and patience and loyalty: that whoever is of the proper character will be aided of the Lord to victory, so that the stumbling-stone to such will be a stepping-stone to higher riches of grace and blessing. We hear the Apostle speaking of our day and saying, "Who shall be able to **stand**?" (Rev. 6:17.) And the answer is that all the faithful in Christ, all the true members of the elect body, will stand in this day of testing, because the Lord will give his messengers a charge, a message in their interest, that they may bear them up in their hands by their power, lest they should be stumbled in this time. **Nothing shall be able to stumble, to deceive, the very elect.**—Matt. 24:24.

Temptation Third—The Devil

All of these temptations were of the devil, but from different standpoints. The third one was Satan's own temptation in a special sense or degree, in that it was along the subtle lines which he himself has seemed to follow in all his work as an adversary of God and of righteousness.

In this temptation the Lord is taken, not physically but in the spirit of his mind, up into a high mountain—a very exalted kingdom. Physically he was all this time in the desert near Jerusalem, and as a matter of fact there is neither in that desert nor anywhere in the world a mountain from which all the kingdoms of the world could be viewed except with the mind's eye. The very high mountain or high kingdom superior to all earthly kingdoms was Satan's own dominion of the world. For a long time by usurpation he has been the prince of this world, who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience, and who blinds the minds of those who believe not the gospel. (2 Cor. 4:4.) Not that Satan is known to be the ruler and is recognized as such, nor that God has given him this dominion, but by deceiving mankind he has usurped the control of their minds. He is the great deceiver of whom we read that in the Millennial age our Lord Jesus shall bind him that he shall deceive the peoples no more.—Rev. 20:3.

In this temptation Satan seems to have entered sympathetically with our Lord in his work, as though he had said to him, "I see that you are bent upon doing a thorough work, and that to some extent you realize the difficulties which are before you—the impossibility of bringing order out of present confusion. You see the world of mankind steeped in sin and ignorance and superstition, taking pleasure in war, licentiousness and falsehood. You long to recover them, to establish a dominion of righteousness in which all the people shall be blessed and brought to see the advantage of obedience to God, of lives of peace, sobriety and happiness. I am with you in this matter. I also deplore the wretched condition of the world; I have been a witness to its degradation for four thousand years, and am now ready to join with you or rather to have you join with me in the work of lifting the world out of its deplorable condition.

"It was not my original design to bring such a blight upon mankind. I wanted to have a dominion. I wanted to be a ruler; there was no chance in heaven, because everything there was strictly under the rule and guidance of Jehovah God; therefore I endeavored to establish a kingdom amongst men. I will admit that humanity as it is at present is no credit to me or to my reign of centuries. I am willing to turn over the entire matter to you, to exert all the influence and power which I possess amongst men and to thus give you the control of the whole world to lift them up, to bless them, to do them every good, if you will but recognize me in connection with this dominion of earth. This is the short road to all that you desire to accomplish for man, and it is the only road, for you may well judge that if you do not take up with my proposition I will oppose you at every step and you see what my influence is amongst men. Not only will you yourself have most rugged experiences, but all who will attempt to co-operate with you I would oppose, so that there would practically be no opportunity for doing the good you have come into the world to accomplish except as you have my assistance and co-operation."

"Him Only Shalt Thou Serve"

Our Lord's answer came promptly; we might paraphrase it thus: "O, Lucifer, it is true that you have great power, that you could co-operate, that you could also on the contrary oppose the work in which I have engaged and to which I have just consecrated my life. You rightly judge that my flesh shrinks from such a terrible conflict as I realize is before me, and that if the work could be accomplished in an easy, peaceable manner it would be my joy to have it so. But I remind you that **my life is not consecrated to the work but to the Father,** my God, and from this standpoint you are not only God's opponent, adversary, but also my adversary, in that you are endeavoring to alienate my affections and loyalty from him. Get thee behind me, I will not recognize you, I must follow the right course, well expressed in the Scriptures which say, 'Thou shalt reverence the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.' **"There can be no compromise.** You are on one side of the matter and God is on the other side. You may oppose me in my work in every way within your power to the extent that the Almighty will permit you. No more can you do, and if this in the Lord's providence shall bring me trials, disappointments, pain, suffering, death, I have already pledged myself to God to the full extent of all this."

The temptation was ended, our Lord's firmness and uncompromising loyalty to the Father and to his plan were fully vindicated; he was prepared now for the ministry of three and a half years, and knew to expect that from start to finish he would have the opposition of the adversary in every sense of the word—even unto death, even the death of the cross.

Similar Temptations Before His Brethren

In what respect are we tempted as was our Lord in this final temptation? We reply that **similarly the adversary comes to us with suggestions respecting a compromise of the Truth.** As the eyes of our understanding open to see to what extent evil has a dominating influence in the world, and that fidelity to the Truth will cost us all that we have, in that same proportion usually comes **the suggestion to compromise, to try to accomplish the good by more or less partisanship with the evils that are in the world.** It is along this line that many justify themselves in respect to worldly forms and customs. . . . This was exactly the course which Satan proposed to our Lord and which he rejected. **All who would follow in the footsteps of Jesus must also reject every compromise with the world**—"Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John 17:16.

Let us remember the words of our Lord, that those who would be his disciples should sit down first and count the cost before they enter upon discipleship, before they make the consecration of their lives, before they take upon them the holy name, "members of the body of Christ," the Church. And having taken their stand with the full knowledge that the way in which they are going is a narrow one, full of trials and difficulties, and that its further end is death, they will, with this view before their minds and such a consecration, be less likely to be sidetracked by the deceiving oppositions of the Adversary. Rightly instructed by the Word of the Lord they know that no real blessing could have come to the world except through his death, and to whatever extent he might have yielded to the Adversary's proposition for an easy way would have been a hindrance to that consummation.

Likewise they know that all the Church, the elect of God, called to walk in his footsteps now, are to take up his cross and follow him and be faithful even unto death if they would have the crown of life. They see that in the divine order the blessing of the world can come only through the sacrifice of the Christ, Head and body. The more they come to understand the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of God's great plan, the more they see the wisdom of the divine arrangement and the impossibility of the success of any other. The sacrificing priesthood of the present time is to constitute the glorious Royal Priesthood of the future, through which all the families of the earth are to be blessed. All who would constitute themselves members of this Royal Priesthood must learn at the very beginning of their experience to say, Not my will nor my way, but thy will and thy way, O Lord, be done.

Let each of us as followers of the Master be prompt in giving our response to the Adversary's proposition of compromise. **He who dallies with temptation increases its power every moment;** hence the propriety, yea, the necessity, of an absolute consecration of the heart, the will, at the beginning: on that foundation the daily conflicts with the world, the flesh and the Adversary become much more simple and lose much of their power. Meantime let us pray as our Lord directed, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the evil one," realizing that of ourselves we are no match for the Adversary, that our help is in the Lord, and that greater is he who is on our part than all they that be against us. Z. '06:38-45.

The Importance of Self-Control

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city which is broken down and without walls."—Proverbs 25:28.

THE word "spirit" is used in a variety of ways. We speak of a horse as having a fiery spirit or as having no spirit. We speak of the angels as being spirits. We sometimes speak of the spirit of life. We also speak of the spirit of the human mind—that is evidently the thought that is here presented. The words of the text are equivalent to saying, He that hath no rule over his own mind, his thoughts, is like a city that is broken down.

What would a broken-down city be like? In olden times, when civilization had not reached the degree to which it has now attained, there was but little police protection, and marauders were numerous. Those who were disposed to get their living by stealing had excellent opportunities. It was necessary that cities be surrounded by walls as a protection against enemies. Any city with broken-down walls would have great reason to fear such marauders. It would invite attack and be certain to meet with disaster some time.

The wise man has here likened such a city to a broken down human will. The will is to be continually on guard over the mind and to allow nothing to enter there except through the regular gates—Conscience and Judgment. These gates are to be watched so closely that they may admit only such thoughts as would be non-injurious, profitable, wise—in harmony with the Word of God. Every human being should have a will and should keep it in good repair, should see to it that it does not get broken down; otherwise shipwreck of character will follow.

By the will is not meant merely a wish. There is a decided difference between a wish and a will. Some wish that they possessed a million dollars, but they have not the will even to try to get it. Some have a wish to get up at a certain hour in the morning; but the wish does not get them up, because the will is broken down. They say to themselves, "Oh, a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands in sleep! They have no control of themselves. They may think they will gain this control by setting an alarm clock. By and by the alarm clock does no good; they do not hear it at all.

Control in Small Things Gage of Character

Whoever allows his will to become broken down as to the time he will arise in the morning has a more or less weak will in all matters. We should make reasonable regulations for our time of rising and of retiring. Having used our best judgment as to what should be done, we should see that it is done. Unless the doing of this should be found harmful to ourselves or to someone else, it should be carried out.

It is important to carry out the dictates of our best judgment so that the will may be strong, so that the individual may not be a vacillating character. The same principle applies to our choice of food. Some will say, "I know that this dish does not agree with me; but it comes to the table, and it seems to agree with others. I cannot eat it without subsequent discomfort; but I like it. I wish it would not come to the table!" So he partakes of it and suffers the consequences. He has the desire for the food, but not the will to resist taking it. The proper course for each one is to see to it that he does not eat what he knows is injurious to him, whatever others may be able to do or may choose to do.

Indecision and lack of character in little things affect all the greater things in life. The person who gets up irregularly is apt to be irregular in business. The person who cannot determine what he should eat is likely to be subject to caprice, to be weak in all his decisions. Such a one will be likely to let some salesman influence him as to what he will buy. Some are too largely subject to the control of others.

A Firm Will—Not Obstinacy—Essential

An old adage has it that "A wise man sometimes changes his mind—a fool, never." Ruling our own spirit does not mean that we are to go to extremes and say, "Well, I said I wouldn't; and I won't!" There may be good reasons for changing our mind, and then it would be a proper course to make that change. God is seeking for the class of people who properly rule their own minds. If they learn to rule their minds before they come into the family of God, it will be that much the better for them. But at any rate, the only way they can get into the Kingdom will be by developing character.

The Bible tells us particularly what things are of the flesh, and what are of the Holy Spirit, the holy mind, of God; what things, therefore, constitute the holy disposition we should have. It tells us that we should put away anger, malice, hatred, bitterness, wrath, anger, strife; and that we should put on meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These lessons must be learned. We cannot say that the flesh will ever be brought under complete control; but the will must be there, and as much control of the flesh as is possible by Divine help should be added day by day.

The Lord is seeking people of strong will, strong character. Therefore there must be a positive turning to the Lord and a definite covenant with Him at the first, or else we are not acceptable to the Father. Then after we come into His family we find that some things that we thought all right are all wrong and must be corrected; and in proportion as we have in our past life ruled our own minds, controlled our fleshly appetites and impulses, in that proportion we shall make slow or rapid progress in the new way. How much of consecrated time may we use for business, for pleasure, or in one way or another? How much of consecrated money shall be spend on ourselves? All this is to be regulated by our Covenant with God. We must seek first the interests of the Lord and His Kingdom. These must be first in all our arrangements, and earthly things must be secondary. Hence the importance of fixed character, a will prompt and unflinching for God.

Z. '15: 87.

Forgiveness Versus Malice

"Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Eph. 4:32.

A FORGIVING spirit is a part of the spirit of love, a part of God's spirit, the holy Spirit or disposition—the spirit of the truth—inculcated by God's Word.

It is thus the opposite or contrary of the spirit of malice, which is a part of the evil spirit or disposition common among men in their fallen condition—the spirit or disposition of the world.

A forgiving spirit is kindred to the spirit of love, joy, peace, meekness, patience, brotherly-kindness, godliness. A malicious spirit is related to anger, back-biting, slander, wrath, jealousy, hatred and all the works of the (fallen) flesh and the devil.

Recognizing these two spirits in the light of God's Word, his people must surely desire and seek more and more to cultivate the **forgiving disposition**—a spirit of readiness or willingness to forgive, which would **rather** that the transgressor would penitently turn from his evil way to the way of righteousness, and which would **take pleasure in** receiving him back into fellowship again under such conditions.

However, on this as upon every question, extreme and unscriptural views are sometimes entertained. Some feel that the most extreme view conceivable must be the right one, because of their desire to get as far away as possible from the unforgiving or malicious spirit. In consequence, some are continually chiding themselves for not being able to forgive those who have not repented, who have not asked forgiveness nor brought forth fruits (evidences) indicating repentance.

This comes of the fall. Human judgments have become defective, so that it sometimes perplexes us to know how and where to draw the lines upon our own hearts and conduct. But here God comes to our rescue. He knows: his mind or judgment and not our own imperfect judgments, therefore, must be our guide or criterion; and his Word expresses to us his mind (spirit or disposition) on this and every subject. If we accept and use it, instead of our own imperfect judgments, we are said to have "the spirit of a sound mind."

Let us study and adopt as our own the spirit of God's sound mind on this subject of **forgiveness,** casting aside as erroneous whatever our own depraved judgments may have previously accepted. This will be following the instructions of the text at the head of this article, and we will learn to forgive **even as** God forgives.

(1) Our spirit or disposition to forgive any one should be of the heart, prompted by the spirit of love and brotherly kindness. It should not be a forgiveness forced out of us by importunity, nor by the appeals of many, nor by pity for the wrong doers' sufferings or sorrow. It should be there pent up in our hearts, ready to pour forth upon the offender as soon as he repents and gives reasonable evidence of his sincerity. God **waits** to be gracious, **desires** to pardon sinners; and such must be our attitude toward those who trespass against us. But God always **waits** for repentance, and never grants his pardon to those who are unrepentant, nor receives them into fellowship as friends.

True, he loved us while we were yet sinners (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8), and he does good even to the unthankful, giving sunshine and rain and food to all; but that is a pitying love, not a fellowship love, not a communing love: it is the sympathetic love of a benefactor. And we are to have this pity-love also, even to our enemies. We are to love our enemies, and do good to them that persecute us; but with us, as with God, this can be no more than pity-love: it cannot be fellowship-love, "for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" Nevertheless, while we can have **no fellowship** with the unfruitful works of darkness, but must rather **reprove** them (Eph. 5:11), we can still have that benevolence of heart which would not permit even an enemy to perish with hunger. "Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him," etc. In so doing we are but imitating our Heavenly Father, who is merciful even to the unthankful and despiteful.

(2) God's readiness or quickness to forgive and receive into fellowship depends upon the amount of light and favor sinned against. . . . But **in proportion** as any have tasted of the good Word of God and been made partakers of the holy Spirit, etc., and have sinned wilfully against light and knowledge (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31), in that **same proportion** God is slow to forgive, and will not receive such back into fellowship, except they bring forth works proving their professed repentance to be sincere. And God assures us that there is a degree of wilful sin, against full light and ability, that he will never forgive—"There is a sin unto death: I do not say that ye shall pray for it."—1 John 5:16.

In this, also, we should copy our Father in heaven. We should be very ready to forgive the blunders and errors of either natural or spiritual childhood, and to all the weak and inexperienced, even before they ask, we should manifest our **willingness** to forgive. And with all who trespass against us, our **willingness** to forgive should be proportionate to the ignorance and lack of wilfulness and malice on the part of the transgressor. Whenever malice, wilfulness and knowledge have been factors in the transgression, it is our duty to be proportionately slow to forgive and to require proportionately longer and stronger proofs of repentance.

But this is as far as we may go. Although we may be able to decide what would be a sin unto death against God (1 John 5:16), we may not decide that any transgression against us is **unforgiveable;** against us there are to be no unpardonable sins. Our imperfect knowledge, as well as our imperfect judgments, forbids such a decision. Hence our Lord said, "If thy brother trespass against thee, **rebuke him;** and **if he repent,** forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." Peter said, "Lord how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times, but, Until seventy times seven."—Luke 17:3, 4; Matt. 18:21, 22.

From these Scriptures it is evident that some of God's people make the mistake of forgiving transgressors before they repent. It is as much the Lord's command that we **rebuke** the transgressor, and that we **do not forgive** until he turns again and repents, as it is his command that we do forgive, from the heart, when he does **turn** and **repent**. And if he trespass seventy times seven times he should be **rebuked** as often (either by word or conduct or both), and should **repent** in words and **turn** in conduct just as often.

To require less than this is to disobey our Teacher's instructions and to do injury to the transgressor by giving him lax ideas as to his duty. A lack of strict justice, in this respect, on the part of God's people has often injured their children, whereas a proper exercise of justice with forgiveness on proper grounds would have helped those children the better to understand God's dealings, and would guard them against expecting his favor except upon full repentance; and also against tempting divine mercy by sinning against knowledge.

But while some need to correct their hearts and conduct as above, more, probably, need to guard against an unforgiving spirit. Such should remember that Christ Jesus by the grace of God tasted death for every man—paid the price of every man's natural or inherited imperfection—and consider that if God can accept that **ransom-price** as the full satisfaction for all except **wilful** sins or the **wilful portions** of sins, then we can and should do so also; and all who have God's spirit or disposition will hold wrong-doers responsible for only their **wilful share** in sins and be ready to forgive and pass over quickly whatever is of Adamic depravity and truly repented of and thereafter shunned.

Let such remember the words, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and **just** to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"; and consider that we who accept our Lord Jesus' sacrifice, as being for the sins of the whole world, must also, if **we** would be **faithful** and **just**, forgive those who trespass against us, if they confess and repent, because Jesus paid **all** of their debts, to us as well as to God.

Justice, therefore, demands of all who trust in the merit of Christ's sacrifice as the ground of their own forgiveness, that they recognize the same precious blood as the covering of all Adamic ignorance and weaknesses. And the Lord assures us that unless we forgive those who trespass against us (when they repent), neither will he forgive us when we repent.

Moreover, our forgiveness must be from the heart (Matt. 18:35)—not a lip forgiveness and a heart hatred. The forgiven one may be held at a distance for a time to prove the sincerity of his repentance; but just as soon as we have good cause to believe him sincere we must be prompt and hearty in our forgiveness—as a heart with a forgiving spirit or desire will always be glad to do. The length of time we may hold aloof from the erring one must be measured by our willingness to have our Heavenly Father hold aloof from us when we trespass against him: this is the Divine rule of the Lord's prayer. But, even then, although fully and heartily forgiven, we may not put such a one into a place of the same responsibility as the one from which he fell until we have seen a stronger and truer character developed in him. And this would not imply a lack of full forgiveness, but merely a proper caution—not only for our own protection, but also for the good of the one who transgressed and his protection from too strong a temptation of the same kind.

We find no mention in the Scriptures of forgiving on God's part without the requirement of repentance. The passage which reads, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34), might be considered to refer to a pardon without repentance; but these words are not found in the oldest Greek MSS.—the Sinaitic and Vatican.

A passage frequently misunderstood is:

"If thou comest to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift and first go and be reconciled to [or make amends to] thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."—Matt. 5:23, 24.

It should be noted that the one addressed is not the brother trespassed against, but the trespassing brother. He must leave the offering of his gift or prayer, until he has made amends to his brother for the wrong he is conscious of having done him, in word or deed. Not until then will his offering be acceptable to God. Z. '10:59, 60.

A Friend in Need a Friend Indeed

1 Samuel 20:30-42.

Golden Text:—"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."

HISTORY does not record a more touching story of love than that which existed between Jonathan and David. Both were noble characters, capable of loving deeply, intensely, although in many respects they were men of entirely different stamp. David was the more versatile. . . .

Jonathan, the son of King Saul and heir apparent to the throne of Israel, had also noble qualities. He was a faithful son, who alone could comfort his father in his times of disappointment. He showed himself an able warrior and displayed great faith in God; and his religious nature was apparently as fully developed as was that of David. Evidently these elements of honesty and devotion and reverence for God which these two men perceived in each other, constituted the basis of the great friendship which so spontaneously knit their hearts together in a wonderful bond of friendship—love. Indeed, according to the entire account, Jonathan would seem to have been the larger of these two great souls and his love the greater. From this standpoint alone, since love is the principal thing in the world, Jonathan may be considered to be one of the grandest characters in the world: for he loved much and against his own interests.

Deep Friendship for His Rival

At times friendships spring up based upon mutual admiration, and often with a measure of selfishness in co-operation. But in the instance under consideration selfishness would have operated against the friendship; it is, therefore, a sample of disinterested love. Every success and honor that came to David raised him as a popular idol to the place which Jonathan to a considerable extent had held. Every advancement of David meant the preparation of the people to receive him instead of Jonathan as Saul's successor. The king saw this, so did Jonathan; but they were reversely affected by it. The king was made jealous, angry; Jonathan, reversely, loved his rival, and that from the time of their first meeting, on which occasion he gave to David his armor and court robes. (1 Sam. 18:4.) We read, "The soul of Jonathan was knit unto the soul of David"; their natures interwove, intermixed —a beautiful description of the purest and truest of love. . . .

The Basis of Loving Friendship

Friendship love is not a miracle, but results from certain combinations. The one we love need not of necessity be just like ourselves, but rather would appeal to us more as a counterpart possessing qualities which we admire, but do not so strongly possess. Darkness, however, never loved the light; the light never loves darkness. Hence for friendship-love on a noble plane both friends must have high ideals, noble aspirations, even though they may have these in different measure. Each should see in the other something to esteem and to look up to; although in the case of the Almighty this cannot be true; His love for us must be chiefly along the lines of sympathy for us and appreciation of our endeavors to attain to his character standards. We may be sure, too, that in Jonathan's case reverence for the Lord had much to do with estopping any feeling of rivalry and with encouraging his admiration for his rival. Who will not admit that such an appreciation of the divine will and providences would be a help to all friendship, a hindrance to all spirit of rivalry and in general a most valuable uplift in every Christian character? How much it means to us in the way of contentment to know that our heavenly Father is at the helm as respects all the affairs of his people! How much rest it permits in our own hearts! How much meekness, gentleness, kindness and love it prompts toward others, both to realize that they as well as ourselves are subjects of divine care, and to have a heart so fully submitted to the Lord as to desire that his will shall be done irrespective of our own temporal interests or those of others.

Undoubtedly this was the good basis of Jonathan's love; and undoubtedly it is the fruitful soil out of which all proper love amongst the Lord's people will be developed. We must love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul and strength before we shall be prepared to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to wish for him the same riches of grace that we desire for ourselves under the Lord's providences. Still more is it necessary to have this supreme love for God before we could in any measure approximate the degree of love which the Lord set before his followers as a new commandment, saying, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." Jonathan's love approximated this Christian love, this self-sacrificing love which so loved his neighbor as to delight to see that neighbor have the Lord's blessing upon him, even while this meant his own loss of honor, prestige and kingly power. Oh, that such love as this might more and more prevail in the hearts of the New Creation! It is to such that the Apostle says, "Let the brother of high degree rejoice in that he is abased, and the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted"—under the Lord's providences.

A David and Jonathan Bond

It is not necessary for us to form a society for the propagation of the Jonathan and David bond of love amongst us as the Lord's people. We have this organization which inculcates a love that is even greater. The head, the chief, the center of this organization is our Lord Jesus Christ, who not only exhorted us to the highest conceptions and practices of love, but exemplified this in himself when he laid down his life, not only for his friends, but also for his enemies. "Greater love hath no man than this." This greatest of all lovers, our Lord Jesus Christ, has organized an association of lovers, and has made membership therein dependent upon the willingness of his followers to take up the cross and follow him, to lay down their lives for the brethren.

Only those who have made such a consecration of faithfulness to the Captain, faithfulness to the spirit of love, faithfulness to one another as members of the Body of the Anointed—only these are admitted to membership in this exclusive society, "The Church of the Living God, whose names are written in heaven." And more than this, the founder of our society has told us that he is the Vine and we are the branches; and that every branch in him that beareth not this fruit of love will be taken away, cut off from the Vine, disassociated from membership in this blessed Church. He assures us further, that our faithfulness to our covenant with this true Vine will bring upon us purgings, prunings from the great Husbandman. . . .

How Love May Be Developed

David, the younger man of the two, as we have seen, possessed by nature a deep, generous character, capable of intense love, but apparently time was required for its development. And as we perceive Jonathan's love for him, the brighter and more intense at first, we find that David's love was drawn forth, that he loved in return, just as God's love was first toward us and subsequently our love drew out toward him increasingly. Our lesson tells us how Jonathan endeavored to preserve peace between the king and David, but finding his father intent upon killing his friend, he took occasion to forewarn David that he must flee, as matters had come to that pass where his life would be unsafe anywhere near the king. This warning was given by a previous arrangement in a field at a distance from the palace. David was hidden behind a great rock. As an excuse, Jonathan went forth to practice archery, with a lad accompanying him to bring back the arrows. His real mission, however, was to advise David whether or not he must flee that vicinity. His words to the lad, "Make speed, haste, stay not," while appropriate to the arrows, were really intended for David, that he might know the urgency of the situation. Then, sending the boy with the weapons to the palace, Jonathan concluded that he must risk a few moments with his friend. By this time David was realizing the depth of Jonathan's love, which had been proven in so many ways and now finally in his willingness to protect David's life, when it would have been to his own interest to permit his father to wreak vengeance upon David. Such a love is rarely known, except amongst the saints; and alas, we fear not too much experienced even amongst these. **When, however, we do find a friend who sticketh closer than a brother, we properly appreciate him all the more because of the rarity of his kind.**

At this meeting David bowed himself three times to the earth, an eastern custom expressive of humility and appreciation. The friends kissed each other and wept one with another, David ultimately appearing to be the more heartbroken of the two. Although confident in the Lord, he was leaving his home to be an outcast—an outlaw. He not only was losing the companionship of his dear friend Jonathan, but he would be considered by many of the people of his own nation as a traitor, because of the king's opposition and the necessity it would put upon him for becoming a kind of brigand. Then it was that Jonathan said to him, "Go in peace; forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord shall be between thee and me and between thy seed and my seed forever." They parted, according to the record, and never met again except once, a year or two later, when David was pursued by Saul. Then Jonathan went again to his friend to comfort him and "strengthened his hand in God."—1 Sam. 23:16.

A glimpse of David's estimation of Jonathan and his love is given in what is termed "The Song of the Bow," David's touching lament at the death of his friend Jonathan. He exclaims, "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." (2 Sam. 1:26.) But we, dear friends, know of a still more wonderful love than this, of which we sometimes sing,

"Love of Jesus, all divine,
Fill this longing heart of mine."

Love begets love; and so the Scriptures tell us that it was not that we first loved God, but that he first loved us and manifested his love for us in the gift of his Son. So it was the love of Jesus that attracted us and drew forth our love in response. And day by day, as we come to appreciate more and more the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God and of Christ, which passes all human understanding, the more our love toward them will increase and abound. And as it increases we ourselves become more Godlike and correspondingly also from us proceeds a love for others who love us not; and our love for them will excite the love of some in return, and lead them to a greater appreciation of this principle which stands in opposition to the spirit of the world, the love of the world, the selfishness of the world. Let us then seek to cultivate this godlike quality. Let us notice not only that the Scriptures declare love to be the principal thing in the world, but that it is the very essence of the divine character, the very essence of the divine law which is fulfilled in this one word, Love. Let us remember then that in the exercise of this quality we are preparing ourselves for the glorious possibilities to which we have been invited, and which by our Lord's grace we are seeking to obtain.

In the Scriptures sharp contrasts are drawn; and while this love of Jonathan, and the love of the Father and of the Son are set forth as worthy of emulation, another kind of character is also pictured, as when our Lord is represented in the Psalms as saying respecting Judas, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." (Psa. 41:9.) Let us see to it that this spirit of love, our spirit of friendship, proceeds, from the fountain of love itself; for God is love. Let us also have in mind the Apostle's declaration that there are only two great sources: a sweet fountain cannot send forth bitter waters, nor a bitter fountain send forth sweet waters. (James 3:11.) Let us, therefore, settle it in our hearts that any spirit of treachery toward a friend, toward a brother, is not in any sense of the word connected with the spirit of love, but in opposition to it. Let us remember that a sweet fountain, a pure fountain, a love-fountain, cannot send forth bitter waters of hate, of malice, of envy, of strife. We must recognize such a stream of evil as coming from a different quarter, a different fountain, from the enemy of God and man. These qualities are therefore set forth in the Scriptures as works of the flesh and of the devil. Let us remember, too, that a radical change from an attitude of love and friendship to an attitude of bitterness and enmity is not an instantaneous but a gradual work. In the case of Judas we see a gradual deflection, which at first merely murmured because others had honors bestowed from the Lord; yet that spirit of murmuring increased, until within a week it took delight in betraying the Friend of all friends, who was even then laying down life on his behalf. Let us remember that by nature we have seeds of evil, of selfishness, received from the Adversary through heredity, through the fall; and that we need continually to be on guard to uproot all such roots of evil, and need continually to be cultivating the tender plant of love, that its fragrance may fill our entire lives and prepare us for association with him who is love and with him who is the friend above all others.

Our Golden Text

Well has the wise man said that a friend loveth at all times. He who merely loves at a time when he thinks it will be to his own advantage to love knows not love. He who loves, and is a brother in prosperity merely, and whose love and friendship wither under the heat of persecution and adversity, has never known love in its true sense, but merely a certain brand of selfishness—the love of the world.

As God commended his love toward us and showed us that not through selfishness, but generosity, at a great cost to himself, he provided us release from our prison, and gave us privileges of sonship, so true love will be willing to sacrifice. Let us judge then of our love for others, for the Lord, for the brethren, for our families, for our neighbors, for our enemies even, by our willingness to sacrifice in their interest and for their highest welfare. **If we find ourselves sacrificing nothing in the interest of the Lord's cause, let us not delude ourselves by saying that we love the Lord.** If we find ourselves unwilling to endure, to sacrifice in the interests of the brethren and others dear to us, let us not mistake the matter and call it love. If we find ourselves unwilling to do kindness even to our enemies when they are in need, let us make no mistake; for the Lord hath declared that a course of goodness and mercy and self-denial is the only index of a loving heart. If once we can see that such a love of heart is essential to a place in the Kingdom it will make us doubly earnest in the attainment of such a character. If still farther than this, we see that **none will ever gain eternal life in this age or that which is to come, except as he or she shall possess a heart of love**, it will help to awaken us to realize that love indeed is the principal thing, the most important thing to be attained and cultivated by ourselves, yea, by all. Z. '08:246-249.

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All the members of the body of Christ laboring against the course of this world and against public opinion and against the weaknesses of their own flesh and against the great adversary Satan, need spiritual encouragement—assurances that the Lord is for them. The Apostle points this out, saying, "If God be for us who can be against us?"—what will all the opposition against us amount to if God be on our side? He again encourages us with precious words, reminding us of the unchangeableness of God and of the fact that he has already done great things for us and is preparing to do still greater things. If while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly, much more shall his favor be with us now that we are adopted into his family and are seeking to walk in his ways as members of the body of Christ. Z. '03:217.

◇

One of the tests which he puts to the Church in the present time—testing us, however, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, according to the intents of the heart—is our obedience to his Word and Providences. Only the submissive will pass the inspection. All the heady and high-minded and self-willed will surely be rejected. "Let us, therefore, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time." 1 Pet. 5:6. Z. '10:88.

◇

The Lord places us frequently where we have opportunities of choosing between this and that, and where, therefore, it becomes a matter of character or principle with us which we should choose. There is no virtue in choosing that which alone is possible to us. As the Scriptures declare, "The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." (Deut. 13:3.) In proportion to our Love for the Lord will be our obedience to him, and obedience to him means obedience to the principles of righteousness for which he stands and which are inculcated by his Word; and principles obediently followed develop character, which in turn, by patience, perseverance, must be crystallized, become firm and fixed and unwavering. Z. '05:281.

◇

Let us not hesitate to "lay down our lives for the brethren"—our time, talent, influence—doing all as unto the Lord, the Captain of our salvation. Z. '04:83.

◇

The thought of perpetual communion with the Lord, continually looking to him for his smile, continually watching that no earth-born cloud arise and hide from us the Father's face and blessing, is the attitude of the advanced Christian. **To such an one every day and every hour is a time of fellowship with the Lord.** Whenever business cares, household worries, etc., interfere with such communion it is an evidence that we are being overcharged with the cares of this life, and the difficulty should be corrected: either we should rectify matters by diminishing our business responsibilities, etc., or, if this be impossible, we should counterbalance the cares of life with the more earnest and more repeated turning of our hearts to the Lord for guidance in even the trivial affairs of life, much more in the great ones. Z. '04:118.

◇

If the words, "Who shall stand when he inspects?" bring to our hearts an anxious throb, relief comes to us again with the thought that although the inspection will be most critical, most searching—although the trying in the fire will separate the dross completely and purify both the gold and the silver—nevertheless he who thus inspects, who thus tries, who thus purifies, who thus refines, is our Lord and Master who bought us with his precious blood, who has assured us of his love and sympathy, and has promised with the Apostle that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also provide a way of escape; and he has assured us that all things are working together for our good, because we love God and have been called according to his purpose. 1 Cor. 10:13; Rom. 8:28. Z. '06:308.

We know not how much even the very strongest of the Lord's followers may need a word of sympathy and encouragement at times, and we do our own hearts good when we tender such sympathy. We do not mean that fulsome flattery should be poured upon one another; but there is a wide difference between flattery and encouraging, sympathetic words; and who is there of sympathetic heart, possessing a heart filled with the love divine, that is not himself an alabaster box of perfume, which should be opened and poured upon the spiritual brotherhood and all of our earthly friends and relatives as we might come in contact with them, and in proportion as the blessing of the Lord would be appropriately theirs. Let us not forget this; let us use these opportunities which are ours day by day of scattering flowers in life's pathway for others, and perhaps as we do this the Lord will allow some one to scatter some flowers also for us. On the principle that he who watereth others shall himself be watered, he who helps others should never go hungry, he who comforts others should never lack comfort. Doubtless the Lord will see to it that in proportion as we have and exercise the proper spirit of benevolence and generosity towards others, we will have our share of rich blessings in return when most needed. Z. '06: 331.

◆

It is well that the Lord's people strive to live a rejoicing life, giving thanks always to the Father in all things, and **rejoicing** to be counted worthy to suffer shame, etc., for the cause of Christ. But as the Apostle elsewhere declares, **Let us rejoice with fear**: let not our rejoicing be of that reckless, self-satisfying kind which might ensnare us and entrap us; let our rejoicing be in him who loved us and who bought us and who is ever present with us, our best Friend and truest Guide. Let us rejoice, not in feelings of our own strength and courage and wisdom, but in the fact that we have a Savior and a great one, who is able to deliver to the uttermost all that come unto the Father through him. Thus may the Lord be our strength, our confidence, our shield, our buckler. Z. '06: 347.

◆

As a miser counts over repeatedly the gold he loves, and thus comes to value it more highly, so the children of God should count and recount the Lord's favors, and study their benefits, that they may appreciate them the more. The fully consecrated will, in the light of God's Word, find cause for thankfulness in the very things which once they would have reckoned as adversities; for they have learned that all things work together for good to them that love God (supremely), to those called according to his purpose. He who has freely given us Christ, shall he not with and through him freely give us all things? (Rom. 8: 32.) Therefore, those who have rightly accepted God's "unspeakable gift" find in him abundant cause for thankfulness and rejoicing, having in him the promise, not only of the life that is to come, but also of the present life. (1 Tim. 4: 8.) Z. '96: 3.

◆

"Whoever makes the truth appear unpleasant, commits high treason against virtue."

—Z. June, '90: 2.

Does not the knowledge now granted the Lord's people respecting the divine plan of the ages, and its purpose, and the result, satisfy our longings as nothing else could do, and assure our hearts that deliverance is nigh?—Z. '01: 377.

◆

All of the Lord's people, in proportion as they desire to be the servants of the truth, should be continually on the alert to note opportunities for service, and should expect to be guided and used of the Lord.—Z. '02: 71.

◆

Does some one say,—It is strange that God should prosper rather than oppose these strong delusions! Yes, and the Lord himself calls it "his strange work," "his strange act."—(Isa. 28: 21.) Z. '01: 163.

◆

The Lord loves most the humble who take hold of the most important work they see to do and do it with their might, and when he wants a servant for an important place in his service, he gives the opening to these humble ones. Their humility permits him to honor them without injuring them, and thus permits them more and more to honor him.

—Z. '95: 17.

◆

"The true soldier does not debate his cause. He is rightly supposed to have settled upon its justice and righteousness before he enlisted to serve it. Thereafter he avouches it and defies contradiction of it. He is ready to spend all and be all spent in its defense. He does not fight for the rations that are doled to him, but for the great principles and great purposes of the cause to which he is committed." . . .

—Z. '03: 84.

◆

Our choosing of life and blessing and righteousness and God is not merely the choice of a moment; the daily trials and testings of life prove whom we love and whom we serve. Let us examine our hearts and our daily course of life, and note for what we are spending life's energies, what fills our affections, what "satisfies our longings as nothing else could do."—Z. '02: 271.

◆

How thankful we should be to God for the "meat in due season" and light of present truth which hinders us from being "shaken" as are others.—Heb. 12: 25-28. Z. '01: 340.

◆

As we look back and with sorrow view the imperfections of even our best efforts, and then forward and see the lion-like difficulties that seem to obstruct our onward course, we will need greatly to reinforce our waning courage with the special promises of divine grace to help in every time of need. We have the blessed assurance that "the Lord will give strength unto his people." "Call upon me in the day of trouble," he says, "and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."—Z. '06: 3.

◆

The Lord's real disciples have been one in heart, in purpose, with himself and with each other throughout this Gospel age, and they are one today. Z. '05: 102.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER FORTY-ONE

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"Give Us Today Our Daily Bread"

THE Scriptures are very explicit on the point that the only ones who will ever get to the Kingdom will be the ones who **DO** the will of our heavenly Father as expressed in his Word, and that many, very many, who now have unbounded confidence that they will be accepted of the Lord are sure to hear the words, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity, I never approved of you." The fact that one has been fed on the loaves and fishes broken by the Lord's hands is no guarantee whatever that he will be accounted worthy to be the Lord's joint-heir in his Kingdom.

The Scriptures declare "I have been young, and now I am old, and yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread": "No good thing will he withold from them that walk uprightly": "All things work together for good to them that love God"; "His bread and water shall be sure"; "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things"; "Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed." and a host of others of like import.

And it ought not to be necessary additionally to call attention to the fact that there is not one solitary passage in the Lord's Word that would justify any Brother in Christ in asking alms of anybody except the great Dispenser of all blessings upon whose never-failing bounty we all subsist. To whom did the Lord Jesus instruct us that we should raise the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread?" Of whom is it said that if we lack we may ask and he "Giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not?"

Furthermore, it would be quite as improper to respond to an appeal for alms as it is to make the appeal. . . . Be "Wise as serpents and harmless as doves," testing every question—even this question of alms to the needy—by the Scriptures and by them alone.—Z. '07:366.

NEXT CONVENTIONS

Duncan, B.C., Saturday and Sunday, October 2nd and 3rd. Reception Committee will meet trains. For further information please apply to Brother Arthur Thackray, General Delivery, Duncan, B.C.

Seattle, Wash., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 29th, 30th and 31st. For further information please apply to Brother Alex Hogen, 6713 17th Avenue N.W., Seattle, Wash. Phone Ballard 2853.

All Standfast Bible Students are cordially invited to attend these conventions.

◆

NOTICE

The booklet "Notes on the Temple of Beauty" compiled by a committee of three, appointed for that purpose, is now ready for the friends—paper covered copies 50c each, leatherette $1.00 each.

We are to remember that, no matter how far along we may have gone in the "narrow way," there are always branching paths leading from it—paths of self-will, of pride, of worldly ambition, of selfishness, which lure us to leave the direct path, and which sometimes we may be in danger of entering, unintentionally, unwittingly. These paths at first emerge so gradually from the "narrow way" as to seem very little different from it, but gradually they diverge more and more from it. Z. '98:339.

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It should be true to a certain extent that all those who are intimately associated with the members of the Body of Christ in the present life—before he is proclaimed King of the whole world—should be able to recognize the largeness and grandeur of character in those whom the Lord is choosing for this place of honor in the affairs of men. They should be able to take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus—should see in them the spirit of a sound mind. Z. '11:23.

◆

We have endeavored to make clear that the **parousia** of our Lord is wholly different from his **epiphania**. Both of these Greek words are translated **coming** in our common Bible, but in the Greek they have very different significations. The word **parousia** signifies presence, but does not signify any outward manifestation of that presence. It is used in respect to the first stage of the Second Advent, in which our Lord is said to come "as a thief in the night" to reckon with his own servants and to take the faithful of them with him to the heavenly mansion or condition prepared for them.

Our Lord's **parousia** and the gathering of the elect, we understand, has been in progress since October, 1874. It will continue until all of the "elect" shall have been gathered and glorified. In one sense our Lord will continue to be present as the world's King to the conclusion of the Millennial Age: but his **parousia,** in the sense of secrecy of presence, will terminate when, as the Scriptures declare, "He shall be **revealed** in flaming fire (judgments), taking vengeance on all who will not obey the Truth," but enlightening and revivifying all who will hear and, to the extent of their opportunity, obey his message. The **parousia** is to the Church and for the Church only. **The epiphania or apokalupsis of the Lord in power and great glory is not to the Church nor for the Church, but to the world and for the world.** "When he shall thus appear we also shall appear with him in glory," the Apostle declares. Col. 3:4. Z. '10:8.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FORTY-ONE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

"Rejoice in the Lord Alway"

Philippians 4:1-13.

THE EPISTLE to the Philippians is one of the most loving of all the Church letters written by the Apostle Paul. It contains no reproofs, no chidings, such as appear in others of the epistles, but rather it is full of approval, commendation and special love. Apparently, too, this little company of the Lord's people loved the Apostle as fervently as he loved them. His afflictions on their account bound their hearts to him in lasting gratitude. We find that on at least four occasions they helped to sustain the Apostle; once while at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:9), twice while at Thessalonica (Phil. 4:16), and once while he was a prisoner at Rome. On this latter occasion they sent their gifts and expressions of love by a special messenger, Epaphroditus who, arriving at Rome in the malarial season, took dangerously ill—probably with what is termed the Pontine, or Roman fever. It was on the occasion of the recovery of Epaphroditus and his return to Philippi that the Apostle sent back with him this epistle.

A contemporary writer, referring to the practical manifestation of love by the Philippian brethren makes the following comment: "The people of Malta were the only others recorded who expressed their love in this way to Paul. The Ephesians wept over him, but there is nothing said of their expressing their feelings by aiding him. Perhaps they did." Evidently the Apostle needed some such manifestation of affection and appreciation of his efforts on their behalf, for his own encouragement. It must have been hard, indeed, for him to love the Church at Corinth as he did—laying down his life on its behalf, as well as on behalf of the other Churches—while realizing keenly, as his epistles distinctly intimate, that he was but lightly esteemed in return. —1 Cor. 4:7-9; 2 Cor. 10:10.

In view of this close and dear relationship between the Apostle and the Church at Philippi, as between an under shepherd, or pastor and the flock, how full of meaning the first verse of our lesson! "My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown,—so **STAND FAST** in the Lord, my dearly beloved." These words from the pen of a conscientious and sincere man, such as the Apostle was, are fragrant with the very essence of Christian love and fellowship. How much they must have been appreciated, and how much they must have been deserved!

But if there was nothing in the condition of the Philippians to reprove, they, nevertheless, needed the exhortation to **stand fast**. They had already, by the Lord's favor, reached a considerable attainment in the graces of the spirit—they must **heeds** be tested, however, to prove them, to try them; and for this ordeal, which every individual, as well as every congregation of the Lord's people must expect, the Apostle wished to prepare them—to urge that they do not retreat from the advanced steps of love and obedience already taken—that they continue firm, not, however, trusting to their own strength, but, as he expresses it, that they should **"stand fast** in the Lord," trusting in his power, in his grace, sufficient for every time of need. . . .

Laying down certain general principles for godly living, healthful for New Creatures, the Apostle exhorts,—"Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, rejoice." This, the Golden Text of the lesson, represents **the very essence** of Christian living. Under present conditions it is not supposable that outward circumstances will always be favorable to rejoicing, from the natural standpoint. He, therefore, who would rejoice alway in the Lord must have faith in the Lord,—trust, hope, love. Without these he could not so appropriate to himself the gracious promises of the Word as to be able to rejoice in tribulation and suffering and under trials and difficulties, and when falsely accused and misrepresented, and when slandered and evilly entreated for the truth's sake. The only ones who can rejoice **alway** are those who are living very near to the Lord, and who can feel always their oneness with him, and that his protection and care are over them, and that his promise is sure, that all things shall work together for their highest welfare, as New Creatures.

Others may rejoice today and be cast down tomorrow; only the faithful in Christ Jesus are privileged to rejoice **alway.** The thought of the Lord's favors, past, present and to come, makes all the trials and difficulties of such to appear very light afflictions, as but for a moment, not worthy to be compared with the glory, honor and immortality promised, and the blessed privileges of divine service, both here and hereafter. The Apostle emphasizes the matter by saying, "Again I say, Rejoice." We cannot have too many rejoicing Christians, nor can they rejoice too much, if they rejoice **in the Lord.** This rejoicing is not necessarily boisterous, nor of necessity the reverse. It implies serenity, happiness, peace, pleasure of soul, however, and does not mean that noisy démonstration is essential, as some seem mistakenly to think.

The Apostle further exhorts that the faithful let their moderation, their forbearance, be manifested, not only toward the brethren, but toward all with whom they have to do. The Greek word here rendered "moderation" seems to carry with it the thought of **reasonableness,** and of not exacting our rights too rigorously. Mercy and leniency are certainly qualities required of all who would be members of the body of the Anointed. Faithfulness in the performance, as far as possible, of all that justice would require of us, and mercifulness in respect to all our requirements of justice from others should be our rule: so shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, for he is kind and merciful to the unthankful.

"The Lord is at hand!" The thought seems to be that we who are the Lord's are not living for the present time. We are expecting great changes to be ushered in when our King shall take to himself his great power and begin his reign. We are not to be struggling for the last inch or the last penny, nor for the extreme of our own rights; but, rather, to be so full of rejoicing in the good things coming, and already ours by faith, that it will make us generous as respects the things of this present time in our dealings with the brethren and with others. We are not expecting justice from the Lord, for nothing that we have or done or could do would **justly** call for such exceeding great and precious things as he has promised us. And as we are expecting grace or bounty in so large measure we can well afford to be generous and liberal in our sentiments toward others—especially toward the household of faith, because they are our brethren and fellow-representatives of the Lord himself, from whom our bounty is to come. . . .

That the Apostle did not mean to be understood that the Lord's second advent might be expected momentarily, nor before his death, is evident; for elsewhere in his epistles he clearly sets forth his expectation to die, and to wait for the reward, the crown of righteousness laid up for him; elsewhere also he clearly intimates that the day of the Lord could not come until after the great falling away mentioned in the prophecies, and the manifestation of the Man of Sin, etc. (2 Tim. 3:7, 8; 2 Thess. 2:2-10.) Evidently, therefore, his only thought in this exhortation, "The Lord is at hand," was, as already suggested—that we are living in the close of the reign of evil, that the dawning of the day of the Lord is not far distant, and that to the eye of faith it is so near that its influence should affect even the smallest affairs of the present life.

"Be careful for nothing" is the next exhortation; but since our English word **careful** has lost its original meaning, there is danger of error here. The word originally had the thought of being full of care—anxiety, trouble. The Apostle's words correspond exactly to our Lord's injunction, "Take no thought," and signify, Be not anxious, burdened, full of care. It is proper that the Lord's people should be careful, in the meaning of the word careful as used today. We should not be careless, indifferent, loose in our conduct or words, but be circumspect.

Anxiety and burdens are unavoidable to those who are depending on themselves, their own wisdom, their own strength, their own skill; but the members of the body of Christ, accepted in the Beloved, adopted into the divine family, sons of God, are assured over and over again in the Word that if they abide faithful all things shall work together for their highest welfare. Why should they be burdened? Why should they feel anxious? He who guards their interests slumbers not. **When Christians find themselves anxious, fearful, burdened, the evidence is that they are lacking in faith,** and the probability is that they have either never grown to the point of having the proper faith in the Lord, or that they have allowed "earth-born clouds" and cares of this life to come between them and the Lord, so that they no longer have confidence that they are abiding in his love and in his care. All in such condition should go at once to the throne of heavenly grace, and to the divine promises. . . .

Such is the counsel of the Apostle—that instead of continuing in the anxious condition, we should lay all of our affairs before the Lord, supplicating his promised providential care, acknowledging our own lack of wisdom;—and gladly accepting his wisdom and the provisions of his love, we should make every request in a spirit of thanksgiving. This spirit of thanksgiving implies a recognition that the circumstances and conditions in which **we are,** have been supervised of the Lord, and that we are appreciative of his care and trust it for the future. Thanksgiving for what we have, and a full appreciation of the Lord's leadings hitherto and now, will preclude any anxiety for the future; for the thankful heart will conclude that he who favored us and redeemed us while we were yet sinners will much more favor and do for us now that we are his through the adoption that is in Christ Jesus.

The question may arise, Why will not God give us the things which he sees us to need without our making petition to him and claiming his promises? Undoubtedly because we need previously to come into the proper attitude of heart to receive his favors and to be advantaged by them. Even as it is, we may be sure that we do not sufficiently appreciate the divine care bestowed upon us hitherto and now. Even in the attitude of prayer and thanksgiving we probably do not discern one-half of our causes for gratitude, as we shall see them by and by, when we shall know even as we are known. It is the same with natural hunger. Unless we were so constituted that the gnawings of hunger would show us our need of food we would probably appreciate it less, even if we ate as much and with the same regularity.

If we have the foregoing described spirit of rejoicing and trust in the Lord, and make all of our requests, so far as we are able to discern, in harmony with his promise, and **accept with gratitude and thanksgiving, whatever his providence may send us,** then the Apostle assures us, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." The thought here is distinct. It is not our own peace that is referred to. We may by nature be more or less indisposed to peace, restless, dissatisfied, discontented, fearful, foreboding or quarrelsome; but, following the course outlined above, we learn to trust God in all of our affairs, and it is the peace of God—the peace which comes to us from a realization of God's power and goodness and willingness to hold us by his right hand as his children—that comes in, to keep us from worry, from anxiety, etc. The thought is that this peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. It keeps the Christian's mind, so that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion:—and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the divine power and wisdom and love. But it does not assure him of anything respecting his own perfection or worthiness of acceptance before God. This proper peace merely assures us of our standing in divine favor through **Christ Jesus,**—his worthiness, his sacrifice, his aid.

Now we come to the Apostle's grand summing up of the way in which the Christian is to set his affections—fix them, fasten them, hold them upon profitable things. The Apostle points out that the will having been consecrated to the Lord, faith having been exercised in rejoicing and thanksgiving in all of the Lord's providences, the peace of trust having come in, the further steps in the development of character will be through **guarding our thoughts:** and this means also the guarding of our words and acts, because it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, and that the whole course of life is directed. What, then, should be the trend of the Christian's thoughts after he has reached the grand development already outlined by the Apostle? It should be toward things that are true, having no sympathy with anything that is false or even exaggerated. Whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself. Whoever cleanses his thoughts, and avoids exaggeration, etc., is in that degree purifying his mind and his entire character, and coming the more into touch and sympathy with the Lord himself, who is "the Truth."

Nor is it sufficient that we are sure of the truth of matters. We are to test them further, and discern to what extent they are honorable, noble; for although the Lord has accepted us, ignoble and imperfect, and has covered the ignoble features of our characters, and proposes to cover them to the end with his own merit, nevertheless, we cannot be in sympathy with the ignoble features of our fallen condition, but on the contrary must desire true nobility, and the highest standards of honor in our hearts, in our thoughts, in all of our dealings with our God and with our fellows. The test of honor is therefore to be applied after the test of the truth. The thing might be true, but Is it honorable to think about it or tell about it? is another question.

Another test we are to apply is, Are the things just? We are not to allow our minds to run along lines that would be unjust, and we are to learn to apply this test of justice to every thought and word and act of ours, while learning at the same time to view the conduct of others from a different standpoint:—so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of mercy, forbearance, pity, helpfulness. But **we cannot be too careful how we criticize every thought we entertain,** every plan we mature, that the lines of justice shall in no sense of the word be infringed by us with our hearts' approval.

Purity is another quality to be esteemed by us. We are to love and cultivate that which is pure to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we will desire to drop it from memory, and **this will only be accomplished by continually thinking upon those things that are pure,** and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness, and to esteem it. From our standpoint the impure, the unjust, the untrue, the dishonorable things, cannot appear lovely, desirable, worthy of emulation. When we would think on the purest of things we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible, and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and proportionately the loveliness manifested in one or another of the followers of Jesus, who walk closely in his footsteps. **The mind that frequently calls up the lovely perfections of the Lord and the truth, and is well filled by these, is guarded greatly against intrusions of unlovely and unholy things,** contrary to the spirit of the Lord. The Apostle concludes the list, by referring to all things of good repute: things of any virtue or value, things in any degree praiseworthy—the noble words or noble deeds or noble sentiments of anybody, we may safely meditate upon, and as a consequence find ourselves growing toward these ideals upon which our minds, our new natures, thus feed. We will become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Lord and Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained we shall have part in the First Resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness.

How many (how few!) can say what the Apostle says in vs. 9? "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do!" This should be the standard of every Christian, because they each and all are representatives of the Lord, ambassadors for him; hence, so far as in them lieth, their conduct and words should be such as would be living epistles, read by the brethren and by the world to profit. No wonder the Apostle adds that, doing thus, "the God of peace shall be with you." So surely as he was with the Apostle he will be with all others similarly walking in the footsteps of Jesus.

"I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at length ye have **revived** your thought for me." These words seem to imply that their thoughtfulness for the Apostle, and earnestness to improve opportunities to serve him, had to some extent relaxed for a time and been revived. Then, as though fearful that his words might be understood as a reproof, he adds, "Ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity." How careful was this man of God not unnecessarily to wound the feelings of the brethren, and how careful we all should likewise be to let the love of God extend, not only to the degree of giving us liberal sentiments toward the brethren, but also to the extent of influencing our tongues and pens not to wound unnecessarily even the least of them.

The Apostle hastens to point out that he is not complaining of **want.** He had learned to put into practice himself the lesson which he was just communicating to them, regarding rejoicing in the Lord, —to cast aside anxious thought and to approach the Lord in prayer and supplication in thanksgiving, and he possessed the resultant peace. In this condition of heart, however many may have been his necessities, he was not in **want,** for he was **satisfied** that the Father would provide the things which he really needed—and more he did not **want**; for, as he explains, he had learned the lesson, "In whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." We are not to be contented after the manner of the tramp or the indolent and shiftless, who would prefer to "live by faith," at the expense of others who "labor, working with their hands." We are not to be content to allow the opportunities and talents and privileges which the Lord has given us to lie idly by, unused; but while using these talents and opportunities to the very best of our ability and intelligence, and while seeking in prayer and supplication, rejoicing and thanksgiving, to use them all as would please the Lord, we should be **content with the result of such efforts.**

We should conclude that our heavenly Father who feeds the sparrows and who clothes the fields with verdure is quite able to supply our needs in the manner and to the degree that would be for our highest welfare; and so, after having done our part to the best of our ability, we are to be **thoroughly contented** with the results—even if the results should be the barest necessities of life. But we are not to be contented with the barest necessities unless these are the best results obtainable from a reasonable and judicious use of opportunities and talents which the Lord has given us, consistent with our consecration to his service. "Be content with such things as ye have" does not ignore our talents and opportunities, for these are part of the things which we **have,**—the things which, as stewards, we are bound to use to the best of our judgments.

Surely the Lord was fitting the Apostle for a grand place in the heavenly Kingdom, when he gave him such a variety of experiences as are detailed in the 12th verse. Surely, as the Lord was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, that he might be a faithful High-Priest for the Millennial Kingdom (as well as to us now), so the Apostle, by his experiences, evidently was being fitted and prepared for a very honorable and prominent place in the Royal Priesthood of the same Kingdom. And so with us: if we find our experiences in life very checkered we may conclude that the Lord sees that we need both the heights and depths of prosperity and adversity to properly instruct us and qualify us for the position he designs for us in the future. Let us, then, as the Apostle did, **learn how** to abound, not allowing the abundance of earthly good things to swerve us from our consecration vows; and **learn also how** to be in want (need) and yet not to **want** anything beyond what the Lord's wisdom and providence sees best to give,—to be content.

The secret of the Apostle's success is stated in the last verse of the lesson. It was his close relationship to the Lord, his intimate union with him, his reliance upon him: he was abiding as a branch in the Vine, and was strengthened by the same spirit, and thus was enabled to do all these things and to pass through all these experiences with gratitude, with thankfulness, with rejoicing. Let us all thus learn to "Rejoice in the Lord **alway.**"—Z. '03:5-10.

Faith Severely Tested

"By faith, Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac; . . . accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure."—Heb. 11:17, 19.

WITH CHANGES of dispensation come changes of divine methods of dealing with the faithful. The Lord's command to Abraham to sacrifice his son was totally different from any command he would give to his people now; and yet tests of a similar import, though of different kind, are laid upon the Lord's people today, and for a very similar purpose, viz., the testing of our heart-loyalty toward the Lord:—testing of faith in him,—in his wisdom, in his power, in his goodness.

In Abraham's day the patriarchal form of government prevailed, and under it the father of a family held an autocratic power which seemingly was rarely questioned by the children. The same extreme view of paternal government prevails, at least outwardly, in China today, we are informed. The patriarch, Abraham, was amenable to no earthly law or ruler, but to God only; and when the Lord proved or tested his faith and obedience by calling for the sacrifice of Isaac upon Mount Moriah, Abraham, full of faith and obedience, promptly responded, and there was no law or power to restrain the obedience. Even Isaac, who by this time was twenty-five years of age, seems to have offered not the slightest resistance to the divinely arranged programme as set before him by his father; for in the vigor of youth he certainly need not have been bound to the altar contrary to his own will.

A severer test upon Abraham than this one could not be imagined. What could be a more difficult thing for any father to do than to slay his own child, even in response to the divine command? But in Abraham's case the sacrifice was a doubly keen one, because, not only had he the natural parental love for his offspring, but this was the son of promise, for whose birth he had waited according to divine promise, and longed and prayed, for twenty-five years—the son whose birth in his old age was admittedly a miracle of divine power—the son in whom, according to the divine word, centered all the gracious promises which had filled Abraham's heart for now fifty years; and which, during all this period, had constrained him to be a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth, so that he might in due time inherit these gracious promises which belonged to the future. How strange it must have seemed to him; how utterly inexplicable, that the Lord should ask him to surrender Isaac as a sacrifice!

Our respect for Abraham's faith rises higher and higher, as we behold the various manifestations of his confidence in God, and his obedience to the divine command. We say to ourselves, even as new creatures and partakers of the divine nature, O that we might have in fullest measure this abounding faith, this willing obedience, this trust, resting securely in God, this assurance that he is able to accomplish all that he has promised, even though the accomplishment of it should make necessary a resurrection from the dead! For the Apostle assures us that Abraham philosophized upon this matter—respecting the fact that Isaac was his legitimate heir, and had been so acknowledged of the Lord, saying, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." He could see no other way that God's word could be true; yet so strong was his faith that he trusted that the Lord was able to raise his son from the dead in order to fulfil the promise. Heb. 11:19.

This is exactly the kind of faith that the Lord desires to find in the spiritual seed of Abraham, the Gospel Church—a faith that will trust him even where it cannot trace him; a faith which recognizes his perfect wisdom, perfect love and perfect power. It is not a faith, however, that is a spontaneous growth, under present fallen conditions. It requires years for its development. Abraham had not this degree of faith when first he entered the land of Canaan as a pilgrim. It was the lack of this perfect trust in God which made him fearful to acknowledge Sarah to be his wife, when later he went into the borders of Egypt; it was a faith that had grown through his continued intimacy with his Almighty "Friend." His previous trials and testings had already contributed to the development of this his finished faith; the long waiting and frequent disappointments in respect to Isaac had been beneficial; the attempt to assist the Lord in the fulfilment of the promise, in the begetting of Ishmael, and the subsequent rejection of Ishmael as not being of the Lord's arrangement, had no doubt helped to establish the patriarch in his confidence that God's purposes are immutable, and his power unlimited.

And so it is with the spiritual seed of Abraham, the Christ, the Church:—our faith-development also is a work of time and patient endurance of trials and testings, which, rightly received, work out for us an increase of knowledge, an increase of faith, and an increase of fellowship with God,—until, by the Lord's grace, we reach such a development of faith in him as sometimes surprises ourselves, and assures us that we have made some progress: because at the beginning of our way we could not have endured the same trials successfully. Thus we see that in many respects even our faith is a gift of God—that while we exercised some faith in the beginning of our experiences, yet the development of it to such a condition and degree as will be acceptable to God is of God's grace, through his providential leadings, dealings, instructions. To him, therefore, we must render the praise, not only for the glorious results, but also for the faith and the works of this present time, which fit and prepare us for the coming glory and blessings.

Mount Moriah is one of the hilltops embraced in the city of Jerusalem, which of course was not in any degree built or inhabited in Abraham's time. The Temple was built upon this hilltop, and the original rock upon which it is supposed Abraham offered his son—later represented by the ram—is now to be seen. True, it is no longer called the Temple, but a Mohammedan mosque—the Mosque of Omar. Nevertheless, the Mohammedans have preserved this natural rock from any desecration, and visitors are permitted to look upon it over a railing;—the writer (Brother Russell) so viewed it with keen interest in 1892. In Solomon's Temple it constituted the base of the altar of sacrifice, and a drain (apparently a natural one) leads from this place of the killing of the sacrifice, underground toward the valley of Jehoshaphat, or the "valley of dry bones," which typically represents Adamic death, as the Valley of Hinnom symbolizes the Second Death. We see in this the divine foreknowledge and fore-arrangement in respect to every feature of the plan of salvation. God not only foreknew that he would use the land of Palestine in connection with the development of typical Israel, but he premeditated also the construction of the Temple, centuries afterward, upon the site which he selected for it. And that site, and the Temple, and the city, Jerusalem, and the Valley of Jehoshaphat and the Valley of Hinnom, all were intended to be, and are, so many lessons in respect to the divine plan, past, present and to come—to those who have the eyes of their understanding opened to see these matters from the right standpoint—from the standpoint of Jehovah, who promised forgiveness and blessing through Abraham's seed, and who has since been gradually working out his great and glorious propositions. Although our Lord Jesus, the Head, and the Church which is his body, were not slain upon this typical rock in Mount Moriah, nor in any other one spot in the world, nevertheless, the lesson is a clear one to all who understand that the blood of bulls and of goats, which can never take away sin, offered upon this spot—typified the better sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . .

What a joy, what a blessing, to see the real meaning and value of the antitype: and to realize that the death of Christ the Head, and the sacrifice of the Church, his body, so far from annulling or destroying the original divine plan, are only steps in its accomplishment: that in the divine order the sacrifice of the human nature is essential to a part in the first resurrection, with its glory, honor and immortality. It rejoices us to realize that so far from the divine plan being frustrated by the death of the antitypical Isaac it is being consummated thereby—that the death of the Christ is the foundation which God is laying, by which he can "be just and yet the justifier" of all them that believe in Jesus; so that when this glorious Messiah and his house of sons shall be exalted to the power intimated in the promise, he will be fully competent and fully authorized to confer upon the world the great and wonderful blessings which God forestated to father Abraham in an obscure and typical manner. . . .

While the seed of Abraham, the Church, has no such testing as his, it has, nevertheless, many severe faith-trials and testings, and as these are rightly received, and in proportion as faith abounds and triumphs in respect to all of our affairs of life, we are more and more blessed and taught of the Lord, and more and more acceptable to him, and more and more meet for the inheritance with the saints in light, as Abraham's seed.—Z. '01: 357-359.

Our House of Many Mansions

Psalm 84:1-12.

Golden Text—"Blessed are they that dwell in thy house."—Verse 4.

VERSES 1 and 2. "How lovely are thy dwelling-places, O Jehovah of hosts. My soul desireth, yea, it longeth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God." Thus every soul that hungers and thirsts after righteousness longs to be separated from the evil of this present time and to enter that felicitous state where under God's promised kingdom all things in heaven and in earth will praise him and have his communion, as Adam enjoyed it before his disobedience and fall from favor. Not only so, but, under the provisions of the **Grace Covenant,** his people, accepted as **sons** (John 1:12), become his tabernacles, his dwelling-places. As it is written, "I will dwell in them and walk in them," and "Ye are the temple of the living God." (2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Cor. 3:16.) **And all such temples indwelt by the spirit of the truth become beautiful, lovely, amiable, in the eyes of all who have the same spirit;** and thus God's children may now have fellowship with him through each other.

Such are not only temples or tabernacles, individually, but the Church of Christ as a whole is made up of living stones in the one great Temple of the future—Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone—the top-stone. These "living stones" are now being fitted, polished, proved and selected for positions in the future glorious Temple of God. These glorious dwelling-places of God will be transcendently grand; and for a place among those "overcomers," in the immediate presence of God and with our Redeemer—where he is and like him—these are indeed the things for which our hearts and our flesh cry out.

Verse 3. Our common version here gives the inference that sparrows and swallows built their nests in the altars of the Tabernacle. But those familiar with the care bestowed by the priests upon the keeping of the Golden Altar will readily see that no such desecration of the sacred precincts of "The Holy" would be tolerated; while the Brazen Altar in the Court—surrounded continually by Levites—upon which sacrifices were kept burning continually, it can be seen would be one of the last places for a bird to choose for a nest in which to rear her young. Lesser's translation is better: "**Even as** the sparrow hath found a house and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, [so have I found] thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, my God." We must remember that this is a prophecy, representing the experiences of the head and body of the Lord's anointed, and not representing the experiences of the prophet. The rest and peace which the saints find in the two altars is here brought to our attention. The altar in the Court speaks of the great sacrifice for sins on our behalf by our great High Priest, and the Golden Altar in the Holy speaks not only of our Lord's overcoming and acceptableness to God, but also of our acceptableness as joint-sacrificers with him—acceptable through the merit of his sin-offering on our behalf.

Verse 4 declares the joy of all who now or ever shall enjoy a place in the Father's house.

Verse 5 portrays the journey of the consecrated toward that heavenly home.

Verse 6 represents this present time of conflict and disappointment and sorrow—"the valley of the shadow of death," in which, nevertheless, the holy ones may sing for joy and rejoice evermore. "Passing through the valley of weeping, they will change it to a spring: also the early rain covereth it with blessings." The most dreary place and condition is made cheerful and endurable by the presence of those in whom God dwells by his spirit of truth and love. Not only is it blessed to such themselves, but also to all who come in contact with them comes a blessing. The early rain represents the Pentecostal blessing which followed the presentation of the great Sin-offering on our behalf—upon the Church. The latter rain will be the outpouring of the Millennial blessing after the great time of trouble is ended, at the second advent.

Verse 7. Here the progressiveness of the journey is shown, and the fact that it is an individual work and not a congregational or sectarian one.

Verses 10 to 12. "For better is a day in thy courts than a thousand [elsewhere]: I would rather choose to wait at the threshold of the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Here the saint is represented as waiting during the present life for admission to the "Father's house," and having here no rest, no home. Yet even here, to such, "The Lord God is a sun and shield." As our sun he enlightens us and fills us with a sense of his greatness and perfection, and yet through Christ he is also our shield. After realizing the divine perfection from the divine law we might indeed feel that in our own imperfection it would be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But whilst showing us the perfectness of his law he reveals to us the shield which he has provided because of our present weakness—the merit of Christ our Redeemer freely imputed to all who will accept it as their covering or shield. To such as long for his courts and who wait at his threshold and who trust in him as both their sun and shield, even now "the Lord will give favor and honor [as his children—even though mixed with tribulation, working patience, etc.], and no good thing [nothing really advantageous to such and useful to fit them for the Father's house] will he withhold from them that walk in uprighteousness in this way." Yea, verily —"O Lord of hosts, blessed the man [both now and forever] who trusteth in thee."—Z. '92:142, 143.

"Blessed Are the Merciful"

Genesis 45:1-15; 50:15-21.

Golden Text—"Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Eph. 4:32.

THE climax of Joseph's story is reached in this lesson. Truly no one can read the simple narrative in the Bible and not be blessed by it. The present lesson dates twenty-two years after Joseph came into Egypt a slave. Seven years of bountiful harvests had passed, and the second year of the famine seven had come. If we are inclined to wonder why in all those twenty-two years Joseph had not communicated with his aged father, remembering especially that he had plenty of opportunity for so doing after he became Governor of Egypt, let us remember also how particularly his affairs were guided of the Lord, and that quite possibly in this matter he was acting under divine direction. He evidently was expecting his brethren, knowing that the drouth and consequently the famine extended to Palestine and over a wide range of country. Through trusted servants a watch was evidently kept for the Hebrews, anticipating that the famine would drive them to Egypt for supplies. Thus on the arrival of the ten sons of Jacob, Joseph was immediately apprised of the fact. They were arrested and brought before him, treated with suspicion and accused of being spies, and put into prison for three days.

Joseph, the governor, addressed them through an interpreter, that he might the more thoroughly conceal himself, and that they might be more frank in their utterances in his presence. He interviewed them after they had spent three days in prison, and heard their admissions the one to the other that their adversity in this matter was esteemed as a judgment from the Lord on account of their wrong course toward their brother twenty-two years previous. He noted that they still remembered his cries as they had put him into the pit to die; he perceived that the matter had made a deep impression upon their minds, and that they were now in a different attitude of heart. He kept one of their number as a hostage and gave the others a small amount of food, bidding them return and, as a proof of their story, to bring with them the younger brother whom they had mentioned, assuring them that with this proof of their sincerity they would be privileged to traffic without interruption.

The brethren properly enough associated their experiences in the dungeon with those of Joseph, and evidently took to heart the lesson of their wrong course. Although these men with one exception were murderers in their hearts, we see a marked change in their characters. This was brought about perhaps partly by their father's grief over the loss of Joseph, and partly, no doubt, by their own remorse in respect to their wrong doing. Thus an evil deed is not always a precursor of further evil, but sometimes becomes the pivotal or turning point of character. What Christian has not had an experience along this line—that his point of failure, demonstrating his weakness in some particular line of character, has really been to him a valuable lesson, making him the stronger in that particular, the better able to stand future trials and temptations from the same quarter. Thus all of our experiences in life rightly received (even life's stumbling-stones) may prove to be stepping-stones to better things.

Ten Very Changed Men

On arrival at home their experiences were related to their father Jacob, who now also mourned the loss of Simeon, the hostage, but utterly refused to allow Benjamin to go from him. It was here that Reuben, noting his father's sorrow, offered himself and his children as hostages for the safe return of

Benjamin. It was not until the famine pressed them sorely and starvation stared them in the face that Jacob consented to allow Benjamin to go with his brethren to Egypt, upon the assurance of Judah that if anything happened to him he would bear the blame. How evidently these men had learned sympathy for their father during those twenty-two years. Once so indifferent that they brought trouble upon him, they now were willing to pledge their own lives for his comfort. We are to remember that these men were the heads of the tribes of Israel, some of whose children were the most notable in history: for instance Levi was the father of the entire priestly tribe, including Moses and Aaron; Judah was the progenitor of David and Solomon and Jesus our Lord. It was evidently a part of the divine purpose to give these men a great lesson in connection with their father, the famine, etc.—a lesson that not only would be beneficial to themselves but have an influence upon all future time.

Arrived back in Egypt from their father's house, the ten brethren were astonished when they were directed to enter the governor's palace. The money for their previous purchase they had found in their sacks when they emptied them, and this they explained to Joseph's steward, saying that they had brought it back with additional money for the purchase of more wheat. Their trepidation was lest it should be claimed that the money was stolen, the penalty for theft under the Egyptian law being slavery. Joseph's steward gave evidence of having to some extent his master's confidence and some knowledge of his religion, for he answered them kindly, "Peace be unto you: the money returned to you was from the God of your father." He further restored their confidence by bringing Simeon to them at liberty. They washed and prepared for dinner at the governor's house, as they were instructed. What could it all mean?

Farmers, they felt strangely out of place in the palace, and queried why the governor, who had treated them previously as spies, should now treat them so generously. Their astonishment grew momentarily as they noted the peculiarities of the situation: the seats assigned them were in the order of their birth, and when portions were sent from Joseph's separate table they noted that five portions were sent to Benjamin, as indicative of the governor's favor especially upon him. They knew not that the governor, able to understand their tongue, was listening to know whether or not they still were envious, or how they would receive this manifestation of special favor to the younger brother. They stood the test. They showed that their envy was dead, that they rejoiced in their younger brother's favor.

Yet another step of testing was to be taken: the men were allowed to depart with their supplies, but into one of Benjamin's sacks of wheat upon his beast the steward by direction placed the governor's silver cup, and then, ere the men had gotten far from the city, they were overtaken by the palace guard and accused of dishonorable conduct, rendering evil for good in the theft of the "divining cup" of the governor. They all professed their innocence, and declared that if the cup were to be found not only the one who had it should be a slave but the entire company. The search for the cup began with the eldest and concluded with the youngest, Benjamin, the cup being found in his sack. We can well imagine the dismay upon the brethren; they all returned, although the steward said he wanted only the culprit for his slave. How could they face their father Jacob and tell him of this calamity? Returning to the palace the governor, Joseph, was still there. They prostrated before him, and knowing the futility of protestation as to innocence they spoke of the matter as a calamity and resigned themselves to their fate as bondsmen.

The governor replied, "Not so! we of Egypt are not unjust to take you all for bondsmen for one man's fault. Let the guilty one serve, the rest may go free. Return to your home and your families and take with you your wheat." Then it was that Judah, once hard hearted in respect to his brother Joseph and his father Jacob, addressed the governor a most pathetic plea, which for its simplicity and directness and pathos stands out preeminently amongst all the records of history. He detailed to the governor the circumstances connected with the bringing of Benjamin, his father's grief in parting with him, his assurance that it would mean the hastening of his death if anything happened to him, the fact that he, Judah, had become surety for his brother, etc.; then he concludes, "Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad as a bondsman to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren, for how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me, lest peradventure I shall see the evil that shall come on my father?"—Gen. 44:18-34.

The Silver Lining of the Cloud

The final test put upon the brethren by the Lord and by Joseph was met successfully. It was demonstrated that they were changed men, that instead of coldness, indifference and gross brutality, they were tender hearted, sympathetic and willing to suffer one for the other. The time, therefore, had come for the clouds and shadows that had been over them for some time to break away. Joseph, the governor, could refrain himself no longer. He ordered the place cleared of the attendants that he might be alone with his brethren—the matter was too sacred for the eyes of others. The time had come for him to throw off his reserve and reveal himself to them. Alone with them he wept, and his voice shook with emotion as he told them who he was and how their designs against him of twenty-two years before had, under God's providences, been overruled for his good. What wonder that the guilty men trembled now as much or more than ever. What resentment might their brother feel against them? how might he now requite them evil for evil, and send them to the house of bondage or to the dungeon?

But through his tears of joy Joseph spoke graciously to them; and, at first disposed to flee, they gathered to him as he said, "Be not grieved with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God sent me before you to preserve life. . . . So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God, and he hath made me a life-giver to Pharaoh. . . . Haste ye and go up to my father and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt, come down unto me, tarry not." A more dramatic scene could scarcely be imagined, yet through it all runs the thread of simplicity and honesty, and above all the spirit of love and mercy, which could emanate only from the one great instructor, God, and could be exemplified only by those who have been near to him and received his instructions.

"Tender Hearted, Forgiving One Another"

Had Joseph been a saint of this Gospel age, begotten of the holy Spirit and illuminated thereby through the manifold revelations of the divine purpose and character as we have them in the Bible, his conduct would still be worthy of the very highest type of Christian development. But when we think of the circumstances and conditions under which his character was developed, in a heathen land and with but a small revelation of the divine character and plan, we stand amazed. Do we not properly say to ourselves, while studying this lesson, **What manner of persons ought we to be considering our great advantages every way?** Would we have proven as noble and generous as Joseph under the same circumstances and conditions? If not, why not, except that we have not made the proper use of the lessons provided us in the school of Christ? And we know that unless we do learn these lessons and develop at heart such a character of mercy and generosity we will not be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light—not be acceptable to the Lord as members of the elect, the Bride class.

When sending them home Joseph kissed his brother Benjamin and tarried with him quite a while, the two weeping upon each other's necks. Then came the turn of the other ten brothers. How would he deal with them? Surely he would not manifest the affection of kissing them after the custom of eastern lands, because surely he could not feel toward them a perfect love and good will. But he did kiss every one of them, and since the matter was neither of constraint nor for effect, it evidenced the fact that his heart was full of generosity and loving kindness. "Blessed are the merciful," they are the kind to whom the heavenly Father will be pleased to extend his mercy and his favor. They are the only ones who will be in a proper attitude to receive the great blessing of the Kingdom—others not having developed this character for mercy will be unfit for the exaltation whatever may be their portion.

"Am I in the Place of God?"

Our lesson skips over that part of the narrative which relates to the coming of Jacob and his household in wagons sent for them, by the governor of Egypt, with the full knowledge and consent of Pharaoh the king, and how they were settled in the land of Goshen and prospered there. By and by the aged Jacob died in the land of Egypt, but was taken for burial back into Palestine. The funeral over, Joseph's brethren were in some trepidation. Joseph's course in rendering so much good in return for so much evil seemed so unnatural that they feared that it was only a temporary matter for their father's sake, and that now since his death they would be entirely out of favor with the governor. They came to Joseph again and, apologizing for the past, asked assurances of his forgiveness, telling him they were the servants of God and that they were quite willing to be Joseph's servants also. Note the noble answer they got:—"Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now, therefore, fear ye not; I will nourish you and your little ones," and he comforted them, speaking kindly to them.

Generous Joseph! Not a complaint, not a bitter word, only excuses for their villainy. Since the matter had worked out good why should he think evil of the agencies or agents which God had permitted and used? His expression, "Am I in the place of God?" signifies, Is it for me to judge you or attempt to punish you in any manner? Is it not God alone to whom you have responsibility in this matter? and if you can make the matter right with him it already is right with me, for vengeance belongeth unto the Lord and not to his creatures, all of whom are more or less imperfect in one way or another.

Let us apply this lesson each to himself, not only as respects the brotherhood in the Church of God but also in regard to the dealings with our brethren in the flesh and with our neighbors. **What matters it to us whether they meant us evil or meant us good, have we not God's assurance that all things are working together for good to them that love him—to the called ones according to his purpose?** And this being the case, why should we have the slightest anger or resentment against the persons or instrumentalities in any way used of the Lord in connection with our affairs. Those who thus trust in the Lord, and they only, are able to properly view and meet the affairs of life, and they alone are able to rejoice in tribulation, in persecution, in suffering for righteousness' sake, because they know, as the Apostle assures us, that all these things are working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and that present difficulties and trials are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed in us by and by—when we with our dear Redeemer shall sit upon the throne of earth for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

"The Spirit of Prayer and Supplication"

If the story of Joseph, his sufferings and exaltation to power as the governor of Egypt next to the king, represents the story of Jesus and all those who follow in his footsteps in the narrow way of self sacrifice and suffering, incidental to their exaltation to power in the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens; and if the preparation and afterward the distribution of the wheat, the bread of Egypt, for the saving of the lives of that whole people represents well the blessings and glorious opportunities that are to come to the world of mankind during the Millennial age through the glorified Redeemer, it does not seem amiss to suppose that Joseph's eleven brethren are somewhat typical also. We are to remember that it was his own that received Jesus, not those who cried, "Crucify him, his blood be upon us and upon our children."

We perceive that in the Lord's providence that nation has passed through severe experiences and ordeals since. We may hope that these are proving beneficial, and that ere long the famine for the Word of the Lord will reach them and cause them to come to the great Governor for the Bread of Life. The Scriptures intimate that this will be the time of "Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7), but he will be delivered out of it. The Apostle assures us of the same, saying that God's gifts and callings he will not repent of or alter, and that ultimately the natural Israelite shall obtain mercy through the favor of the spiritual Israelite. (Rom. 11:30, 31.) The Prophet (Zech. 12:10) takes up the theme, and tells us of how they shall yet look upon him whom they have pierced, and how they shall mourn as these brethren mourned, and how then the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and upon their manifestation of repentance his forgiveness, and how ultimately their sins and iniquities he will remember no more—that instead he will be very gracious to them and kiss them.

We close this lesson with the Apostle Paul's exhortation of our Golden Text, "Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." The more we each realize our own indebtedness to the Lord for the forgiveness of our sins and for our adoption into his family and for the blessings that come to us as the sons of God, the more should we seek to copy after his glorious character and be copies of our dear Redeemer, the essence of whose character is nothing less than justice to every one—with as much additional of love and mercy as we can possibly attain to. The larger our attainments of this God-like quality the more pleasing we will be in the Father's sight and the better fitted for joint-heirship in the heavenly Kingdom, in the dispensing of the bread of life to all the world of mankind.

He who sees not these things and follows not this course according to the Apostle's word is blind and cannot see afar off—cannot see and appreciate the blessings which the Lord has promised to those who faithfully copy him. Those who do see, find the eyes of their understanding opening more widely day by day to the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth understanding; and to make this progress in joyful appreciation of our benefactor, our Lord assures us means a corresponding growth in benevolence, kindness, gentleness and mercy to those with whom we have to do. While this rule must obtain, especially in the household of faith, it will also extend not only to our own immediate relationship in the flesh, but also to our neighbors and friends—yea to our enemies and to the brute creation. All of these will more and more realize the changing of our characters and dispositions, and it will be to their general blessing as well as to our joy.—Z. '07:123-125.

Proper and Improper Jealousy

"Jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame."—Song of Sol. 8:6.

JEALOUSY of another is always an evil quality; as the text states, it is "cruel as **sheol**," which engulfs all mankind; it is unreasoning and insatiable. One has said of it, "Jealousy is really—whether so recognized or not—a thirst for blood, life: at any moment, when reason is a little weaker than usual, jealousy is ready to kill the thing it **hates** or the thing it **loves**." It signifies either apprehension of being displaced in the affections of another, or of being outdone by a rival in matters of favor or popularity with others.

The jealousy mentioned in our text is the most vicious kind of cruelty, committed in the name of love, or through envy; it is one of the great foes which confront every Christian and is closely allied to hatred, malice, envy, strife, and should be slain on sight as an enemy of God and man, and of every good principle; and to the extent that its presence has defiled the heart even for a moment, a cleansing by the spirit of holiness and love should be invoked. It is not only a cruel monster of itself, but its poisonous fangs are almost certain to inflict pain and trouble upon others. The mind which is once poisoned with jealousy so rapidly brings everything within its environment to its own color and character that it is with great difficulty that it can be entirely cleansed from it.

"I, the Lord Thy God, Am a Jealous God"

Nevertheless, love, wisdom, hatred, jealousy, are attributed to God and should all be in us. We read, "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God." If man could have his hatred and his jealousies along the same lines as God, it would be all right. We, as God does, should hate sin, but not the sinner. God's jealousy is just and is sure to bring to the sinner a just punishment. He tells us that when we have other gods, we must consider **him** jealous; but the impropriety of jealousy is when it leads to bitterness and other like qualities to which the fallen human mind is subject and liable. When the Lord announces himself as a jealous God, he means us to understand that he wants all of our affections, all of our confidence, our entire trust. He wants that we should be so fully in accord with him that his will shall be supreme in all the affairs of life.

This is not to be considered selfishness on the part of the Almighty; because this, under his overruling providences, means to his creatures the largest amount of happiness, the largest amount of success in the duties and affairs of the present life, and the fullest preparation for the blessings which God has prepared for, and promised to, those who love him.

"I Am Jealous Over You With a Godly Jealousy"

When St. Paul wrote, "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy" (2 Cor. 11:2), we cannot understand that he was actuated by a mean jealousy, but that he was jealous for, or in the interest of, the **Corinthians**; he was jealous also for the things that were right and that they should be in accord with them. His jealousy, therefore, was an earnest, anxious solicitude and vigilant watchfulness, a godly jealousy for the best interests of the Lord's precious Truth. This, of course, is a jealousy such as we all should feel in the Church. If we see a condition such as that to which the Apostle refers, a departure from the simplicity and purity which is in Christ, we should feel, "This is all wrong," and should do all in our power and in reason to correct this difficulty. So, if we see anything in one member of the Church that would be likely to cast a reflection upon the Lord's cause, we should feel it proper to put forth efforts to correct that one, lest harm be done.

When we have that jealousy in the Lord's cause, it is different from a jealousy in our own interest. Very few get too jealous in the Lord's cause; however, it would be well, even in his cause, to scrutinize our words, deeds, etc., properly; and while we should be very zealous, very jealous in the Lord's cause, yet we must be very sure that it is not a private matter; and should consider whether or not we are "busybodies." Then, too, we should consider whether it may be a proper thing for the elders to deal with, and whether or not it would be our duty to go to the elders. We should all have a great deal of jealousy for the Lord's cause and the Lord's work, but be very careful that it is not the bitter kind mentioned in the text; in other words, we should be very sure that it is not jealousy of another, but jealousy for another, for his interests and best welfare.—Z. '11:93.

Lesson of the Lilies

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."—Matthew 6:28.

FEAR and anxiety are amongst the most serious foes of our human family. They wear upon the gray matter of the brain; they produce nervous exhaustion and are very injurious to health. For those who would seek to walk in the Divine path which God has marked out for the Gospel Church, fear and anxiety are special hindrances. The Savior had this fact in mind when he spoke thus to His disciples. He would have His followers to be without worry, to be restful of heart. But He would not have them be without carefulness. There is a carefulness which is entirely proper, yea, necessary, on our part, but not this extreme worry—this inability to enjoy the blessings of the present moment because of thoughts, fears, respecting tomorrow. When the Apostle said (Philippians 4:6), "Be careful for nothing," he was not referring to a proper care and sense of responsibility, but to an anxiety which would rob the soul of rest and peace, and which would indicate a lack of faith in the Lord and in His care for His people. The word rendered "careful" here is from a Greek word meaning **over anxious.**

In giving a forceful lesson to His disciples on trustfulness in God, the Master used the illustration of the lilies of the field. The lilies of Palestine are quite common—rather a small flower, many of them red. They persist, live, grow, notwithstanding that no special provision is made for their cultivation, and that they are trodden down by those who pass through the fields. Yet they develop and mature and blossom, and have an exquisite organism, which microscopic examination shows is very beautiful. Jesus declared that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. There is a perfection in the texture of a flower that is wonderful. The finest clothing cannot approximate the delicate structure of the flower, created by an Infinite Hand.

The lesson seems to be that although the flowers may be in an unfavorable environment, unable to do for themselves or to take any anxious thought in the matter, nevertheless, God's providence has so arranged for them that they thrive and become very beautiful. These lilies did not look up and wish that they might become great trees, nor wish that they might climb up higher in the world and nearer the sun, as do the vines. On the contrary, they were content with the lot chosen for them by their Infinite Creator.—Matthew 6:30.

The Lesson of Trust Imperative

And so God's people are to take a lesson from the lilies. They too are to be content with the Lord's arrangement for them—as the poet expresses it:

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

In proportion as we approximate this condition it will give us peace and rest of mind. We are not to worry, and not to be slothful, but are to be diligent, "fervent in spirit serving the Lord," doing with our might what our hands find to do. When doing this, we are to be content and trustful that He will work out all things for our good. He wishes us to learn this important lesson of trust.

Those who neglect to learn this lesson will be unprepared for the great work God has in mind for our future under Messiah's Kingdom. **God will not have any in that Kingdom, we are sure, who are not full of trust.** As the flowers flourish under God's providential care, so are all of His people to flourish—to grow in knowledge and beauty of spirit, in beauty of character. And this is not accomplished by some great things that they do, but by the spirit in which they meet the little things, the every day experiences of life. God's people are to grow steadily, though unobtrusively.

The lily would always have a humble place; it would never be great like a tree. So it is with us here in the flesh. And the Lord puts each one in the place he designs for him. We shall learn better the lessons for the future by being placed under humble conditions now, where we may grow, where our entire loyalty to the Father's will may be fully tested, where all the beauties of our character may be the most fully developed.—Z. '16:94.

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It is well that we should be on guard, to note the spirit of all with which we have to do, and to refuse to go forward in any direction in which the spirit of holiness, meekness, purity, love, does not lead. Z. '98:339.

◇

Are we not learning every day more and more to trust the Lord where we cannot trace him in his providences, when we cannot see the end of the way? If we could see the end would it be faith at all? Z. '07:108.

◇

And so the Lord's people today, as the antitypical Elijah class, are learning that God will do his great work through the still small voice of the Truth in due time, and that the due time for it will not be until the storm, the earthquake and the fire shall have passed. "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." —Isa. 26:9. Z. '04:249.

◇

"To you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom." Nearly all of our Lord's parables related to the Kingdom, and all of them therefore are to be understood by the Kingdom class, the elect, the consecrated. All of this class should be earnestly desirous of an understanding of "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Their earnestness in desiring will be part of the evidence that they belong to this class, that it is proper for them to know. It is to their advantage that it should be hidden, so that they may seek and find, and that in seeking and finding they may have a greater blessing than if the entire matter were strewn upon the surface. Z. '06:124.

◇

As the time for the "general assembly of the Church of the Firstborn" draws nearer, the desire of the consecrated to meet together to "build one another up in the most holy faith" seems to increase. This applies to the little local gatherings in various parts, as well as to the "Small Conventions" and to the "General Convention." We rejoice that this is so, **and hail it** as one of the proper signs of brotherly love. Z. '06:292.

◇

The service which the Ancient Worthies will be given will be more than God would ordinarily entrust to a perfect human being. Z. '13:52.

◇

Do not some after being well fed on spiritual manna permit a selfish, craving spirit to interrupt their fellowship with the Lord to some extent? Z. '02:250.

◇

How clear are the evidences that the falling away from the faith is upon us, and that, as the prophet foretold, a thousand shall fall to one who stands. (Psa. 91:7.) Z. '04:69.

As we prove every matter of doctrine by the touchstone of the ransom, so let us learn to prove every word and act and thought by the touchstone of love. Whatsoever is not of love is sin; will prove injurious to ourselves and possibly to others. Z. '08:200.

◇

"Never forget for a moment that no face can be so beautiful, or any form so divine, but that a bad heart or a wicked heart may make it hateful or worthless. In such beauty there is always a cloud, a film, a veil. Through all its masks and shams the gaze of God goes like an X-ray, straight to the heart and soul. Z. '08:222.

◇

"Whom the Son makes free is free indeed." The wheat will more and more give heed to the words of the Apostle. "**Stand fast,** therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Z. '04:276.

◇

Let us expect the very separations which we see taking place. We could not frustrate the Lord's plans if we would, but we could do injury to our own interests by disloyalty to him, his Word and his brethren. Z. '04:312.

◇

We are responsible not only for what we ourselves may do and think as New Creatures, but our responsibility goes out beyond ourselves to the brethren, to all who in any sense of the word come under our influence. Obscene jesting certainly is to receive no encouragement, to provoke no laughter, but rather to call forth a gentle, loving rebuke. Brother, Sister, let us set our affections on things above—let us walk in the light, let us think of and discuss whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good repute. Let us put away from our conversation and from our thoughts everything that would be defiling and ensnaring to ourselves or to others. **Failure to reprove is a measurable endorsement of the wrong.** A word in season—how good it is, how helpful! But it is equally important that the word of reproof be wisely and **lovingly** given, otherwise it may do harm where we intended good; as the Scriptures say, "Speak the truth in love." Z. '08:183.

◇

Yes, the prayer-meeting test is a good one. Wherever true Christians find it possible to meet for mid-week communion with the Lord and with each other, they will surely have pleasure in so doing. The Spirit of the Lord will constrain them and his Word will encourage them,—"Where two or three of you are met in my name, there am I in the midst." Z. '04:323.

◇

At the present time at least a cursory knowledge of the facts upon which the Lord's message is based obtains throughout the habitable world. This fact of itself, if there were no other evidences, would seem to imply that the witnessing time had about expired (in 1901) and hence that the object of the Gospel age had about been accomplished in the selection of the full elect number of the faithful witnesses, and that their work of blessing the world would soon be due. The expression, "Unto the uttermost parts of the earth," is not to be understood as implying every quarter of the globe, but rather a term of that day corresponding in meaning to our present expression, "everywhere."—Z. '01: 394.

◆

The Christian, by Divine arrangement, has a great deal of liberty to do good, to do everything that is proper, to do everything that will not injure himself or a brother or a neighbor. But he has no liberty to do wrong—no right to do anything that would injure himself or his brother or his neighbor. In other words, our liberties, while apparently absolute, are really limited. All the **Thou shalt nots** of the Law are removed, but the essence of that Law still remains, briefly comprehended in the statement, **Thou shalt love** the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor as thyself. The Christian is at liberty to do anything that does not conflict with this basic Law of his new nature—the Law of Love. This appears upon first sight to be a great liberty, but, on closer examination, it is found to give us much less liberty than others exercise, as they think, with propriety. Not only does the Law of Love thus control us, because that is the Divine standard of justice, but additionally, God has accepted us in covenant relationship with himself under the Abrahamic Covenant, under Christ our Head. . . . Under this Covenant agreement with the Lord we are firmly bound to more than the Law or justice requirement; we are bound to **sacrifice** our rights and privileges, in the interests of others.—Z. '09: 284.

◆

There is room for all the ability of all the brethren in the Church, and such a thing as rivalry or partisanship is entirely out of place. We have one Lord, one Head: we all are brethren, and our highest aim should be to honor our Head and serve the fellow-members: and each one who so endeavors should be highly esteemed, whether his talents are greater or smaller than those of others.—Z. '03: 59.

◆

Private prayer may be considered a sure index to an honest, contrite heart. In our estimation, only the praying ones, even of the Lord's consecrated people, are at all likely to win the prize. If they do not love the Lord enough to render thanks for his mercies, and to approach the throne of the heavenly grace and obtain mercy and strength to help in every time of need, then they are not likely to have sufficient strength to stand the trials and tests.
—Z. '09: 86.

◆

Since we are to be called away soon to the marriage, we are to remember that a part of our watching should be to keep our garments white. We are to watch to some purpose. If we realized how near the Bridegroom is, how careful we would be of our robes! Others do not know, but the Bride-elect knows how near the Bridegroom is. **She will watch and be sober.**—Z. '13:182.

◆

Those who are most thoroughly rooted and grounded, whose hopes are most surely anchored within the vail, are those who have been attested through very trying experiences, and have had occasion to call mightily upon the Lord for help, when there was no earthly arm to lean upon. How many have found that the breaking of earthly ties has meant the strengthening of the heavenly ones, that the opposition of the world and the Adversary has meant increase of spiritual favor, because, "Greater is he that is for us than all they that be against us."—Z. '05:191.

◆

For the Lord's consecrated people to undertake to move Jehovah's arm in respect to their affairs would seem to be the taking of the rudder out of his hands—would seem to be more or less of self-will, which we have pledged to the Lord shall be dead that his will may be done in us.—Z. '05: 202.

◆

At the time that the features of this symbolical Revelation shall come to be understood and appreciated by the Lord's people, they may know that the time of the completion is near at hand.—Z. '05:173.

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The One, the only One, to whom we dare submit our wills fully, completely, is the Lord.
—Z. '09: 252.

◆

Our Lord Jesus promised that during His second Presence He would gird Himself and make His followers to sit down to meat, and that He would come forth and serve them. (Luke 12: 37.) Furthermore He promised that He would provide a "faithful and wise servant," whom He would make ruler over all His Household, to give them meat in due season. (Matthew 24: 45.) The Scriptural proof is abundant that the Lord is now present in His Second Advent, and has been present for more than forty years; that He has during that time had one faithful and wise Servant, through whom He has provided meat in due season for the Household; that all who have a knowledge of Present Truth received it through this channel and from no other source.

If the food upon the table provided by the Master through His Servant was essential to bring us to a knowledge of the Truth and establish us in the faith, then it is manifest that to abide in the faith we must adhere to that doctrine which was taught us through His chosen channel. Any one departing therefrom would prove his lack of faith in the Scriptural declaration above quoted.
—Z '17:180, 181.

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So much depends upon a word in season, and the right word! Not only our words, but our tone of voice should be considered, when we attempt to represent the great King as his ambassadors. Kindness and brotherly love should be indicated in our faces and by our words.—Z. '09: 53.

We cannot do anything very great; but, if filled with the Spirit of the Lord, it is our privilege to be used to some extent in some service of the Truth. And any service for the Lord and for the brethren, even to the washing of feet and any menial service is, as our Lord shows, honorable and a privilege.
—Z. '09:156.

◆

No man liveth to himself nor dieth to himself and no member of the Church of Christ is privileged to ignore the fellow-members of the Body of Christ.
—Z. '09:187.

◆

We must be conquerors. We must be overcomers. And the battle of each of us is within himself. We may indeed do all in our power for others and for the general cause, yet our victory and our title to the Lord's words, Good and faithful servant," "More than conquerors," will not be for us except as our hearts are allowed to dominate our tongues and gain such a victory over impurity and lovelessness as will not tolerate them in any sense or degree.—Z. '09:126.

◆

The new creature has no Original Sin, nor is it responsible for the Original Sin of the old creature, which was justified and accepted of God in sacrifice and therefore gone. The responsibility of the new creature is that it shall keep its heart in the love of God, in loyalty to him. Correspondingly, of course, it will strive to keep the body, the flesh, in harmony with the Divine regulations. Its zeal and energy in controlling the flesh and bringing every thought and word and act into accord, as nearly as possible with the Divine will, shows the degree of its love and zeal.—Z. '10: 216.

◆

We are in the morning of the New Dispensation. We give thanks to the Lord daily for the privilege of living in this wonderful time—and for the privilege of having our eyes of understanding opened to appreciate the Divine Plans for this day.—Z. '11: 5.

◆

If we carefully scrutinize David's character to note what constituted its strongest points, and what therefore, we should seek correspondingly to cultivate, we shall agree that the strongest point was his will, which was rightly directed. It is difficult to estimate the power of the human will. Apparently God has placed all the interests of the present life under the control of our wills, and, indeed, much of the success in respect to the future life is similarly under the control of our wills. Apparently the will, rightly exercised against sin, is invulnerable. As we read, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Just what kind of dynamic force the mind, the will, can exercise against the Adversary, against sin, against sickness and disease, it is difficult for us to understand, but we have the Scriptural assurance that there is such a will, and our own experiences in its exercise have fully demonstrated the truth of our proposition. Strong wills are not confined to God's people. Satan and many of the depraved are strong-willed. Indeed, in this fact lies much of the suggestion of the spirit of wickedness. All who are the Lord's should recognize the value of determination and the unsatisfactoriness of vacillation.—Z. '08: 268.

◆

We see the necessity for the frequent admonitions of the Scripture, that the Lord's people shall be awake:—not of those who slumber; not of those who are idle; not of those who are overcharged with the cares of this life; but that they be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Their service toward the Lord is primarily the bringing of themselves into as close harmony with the Lord's will, and into as close likeness to the divine pattern as possible; and secondly, it is that by precept and example they may help others of the called ones in the same narrow way.—Z. '03: 70.

◆

Our Lord teaches us not to be entirely engrossed with our own trials and difficulties, large and small, but rather to be burden-bearers of others, allowing our sympathies, our thoughts and our plans to be active for the blessing of all those who in any measure are under our care in matters temporal or spiritual!—Z. '08:152.

◆

Let us see to it that under no circumstances shall we ever deny our Lord. More than this, let us remember that the Lord places himself and his Word and his brethren on a par, and assures us that those who deny his Truth deny him, and those who deny his Word of prophecy are thus denying him. Z. '04: 152.

◆

The Truth has a sanctifying power in the heart because it fills the longings of the heart. Every heart has talents and appeals which demand operation, activity. Something must be supplied to meet the hungerings and thirstings of these various talents and qualities of the mind. If the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word be not received into the heart to satisfy its cravings and longings, it will feed upon other things; and the world, the flesh and the devil are all crowding upon it, offering various attractions, some of which will be received if the heart be not filled and kept filled.
—Z. '05: 138.

◆

Our hearts . . . need to be filled with the Lord himself; and our Lord, who calls himself the Truth, furnishes to our hearts various truths as food, as nourishment, as filling our hearts and satisfying our cravings, and by thus filling he sanctifies those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and thus separates them completely and keeps them separate from the world, its spirit, its hopes, its aims, its ambitions.—Z. '05: 138.

◆

The Lord predicates (two) things respecting His word of Truth—first, it is intended for those only of an honest heart . . . and second, it is intended to still further enlighten and thereby to still further sanctify this class for whom it is intended.
—Z. '05: 237.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER FORTY-TWO

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Cumbered With Much Serving

"Christ never asks of us such arduous labor
As leaves no time for resting at his feet;
This waiting attitude of expectation
He ofttimes counts a service most complete.

"He sometimes wants our ear, our rapt attention,
That he some sweetest secret may impart;
'Tis always in the time of deepest silence
That heart finds fullest fellowship with heart.

"We sometimes wonder why the Lord has placed us
Within a sphere so narrow, so obscure,
That nothing we call work can find an entrance;
There's only room to suffer—to endure.

"Well, God loves patience; souls that dwell in stillness,
Doing the little things, or resting quite,
May just as perfectly fulfil their mission,
Be just as useful in the Father's sight

"As they who grapple with some giant evil,
Clearing a path that every eye may see;
Our Savior cares for cheerful acquiescence
Rather than for a busy ministry.

"And yet he does love service, where 'tis given
By grateful love that clothes itself in deed;
But work that's done beneath the scourge of duty,
Be sure to such he gives but little heed.

"Then seek to please him, whatsoe'er he bids thee,
Whether to do, to suffer, to lie still;
'Twill matter little by what path he leads us,
If in it all we sought to do his will."—Z. '10:327.

My Trustful Obedience

"Child of mine, I love thee;
Listen now to me
And make answer truly
While I question thee;
For I see that shadows
Do thy soul oppress
And thy faith so weakens
That I cannot bless.

"Thou hast craved my power
And presence in thy soul;
Wilt thou yield thee wholly
Unto my control?
Wilt thou let me ever
With thee have my way?
Yield thyself in all things
Simply to obey?

"Though my presence ofttimes
Seems to be withdrawn—
Of my inward workings
Not a trace be shown—
Wilt thou count me present
Notwithstanding all?
Still believe I'm ever
Working in thy soul?

"When I give to others
What I to thee deny—
Fold them in my sunshine,
Seem to pass thee by—
Wilt thou still believe in
My strong love for thee;
Yield thee to my purpose
Whatsoe'er it be?

"When I to thy pleadings
Seem no heed to pay,
And thy foes grow bolder,
Claim thee as their prey;
Though towards thee I'm silent,
Wilt thou stand the test?
On my word of promise
Lay thee down to rest?

"If to all my questions
Thou canst answer, 'Yes,'
Thou shalt be forever
One that I love best.
To the inner circle
Of my favored few
Thou shalt be admitted
And my glory view."—Z. '10:153.

NEXT CONVENTIONS

Duncan, B.C., Saturday and Sunday, October 2nd and 3rd. Reception Committee will meet trains. For further information please apply to Brother Arthur Thackray, General Delivery, Duncan, B.C.

Seattle, Wash., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 29th, 30th and 31st. For further information please apply to Brother Alex Hogen, 6713 17th Avenue N.W., Seattle, Wash. Phone Ballard 2853.

All Standfast Bible Students are cordially invited to attend these conventions.

NOTICE

The booklet "Notes on the Temple of Beauty" compiled by a committee of three, appointed for that purpose, is now ready for the friends—paper covered copies 50c each, leatherette $1.00 each.

Published by the Standfast Bible Students under the supervision of members of a Committee of Seven. Address all communications: Standfast Bible Students, Box 7, Victoria, B.C.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FORTY-TWO

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD: AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

"Keep Yourselves From Idols"

Exodus 32:1-8, 30-35.

A STRANGE picture of inconsistency is presented in today's lesson. The Israelites—who, after witnessing many manifestations of divine favor and power on their behalf, after reaching Sinai and entering into a covenant with the Lord, in which their obligations were represented briefly in the ten commandments—are in this lesson shown as idolators, violating the second commandment and the spirit of the first. Moses, after declaring God's commandments to the people, ascended Mount Sinai in their sight into the presence of God, to receive the commandments written on tables of stone. Day after day passed and he did not return. The forty days absence in Mount Sinai must have appeared a long time to the people, who were waiting and longing for entrance upon the promised Canaan possessions. Yet how strange that they should forget the terrible sights and sounds which preceded his going, when the mountain shook and out of the clouds and darkness and midst flaming fire and the voice of a trumpet, God manifested himself to them and only Moses was able to approach, with Joshua, his servant. How strange that these things should all be forgotten within forty days! What an evidence we have here of the instability of human sentiment! Yet we must remember that these Israelites were born in bondage.

In the absence of Moses they came to Aaron, his brother, a very different man, not a leader in the same sense of the word, nor so courageous, nor so governed by principles. The people gathered to him, saying in effect, "Bestir yourself; we should be going on our way to the land of promise. We know not what has become of Moses who has been our leader; he may have deserted us here. We want God to be our leader, but we want something that will represent him, something that we can see. Moses did very well while he was with us, but he has gone and might go again. Make us an image of God, that we may always have God to be our leader, something that will help us as we seek to worship him with whom we have just made a covenant, who has promised to lead us into the land of Canaan." The people were not irreligious; indeed, exceptionally few of the human family are irreligious. In man's very constitution divine worship is provided for: the very topmost organs of the brain represent this religious sentiment and dispose him to worship somebody or something.

This, which was true of the Israelites, is true of mankind everywhere from then until now. Hence the necessity for instruction, that all may recognize the proper things to be reverenced, to be worshiped, to be most highly appreciated. The Israelites were learning this lesson, and with us as with them there is necessity often that we should not only have the plain statement of a truth, but that its weight and conviction should be borne in upon us by some particular lessons. The commandment had said that they should make no likeness nor graven image to represent God, and what they did was only indirectly a breach of this, for the golden calf which Aaron made for them was not graven, not carved, but cast in a mould, and it did not represent God, but probably—like the images they had seen in Egypt—was a nondescript thing which merely represented divine characteristics—a calf's body with a human head and with wings, symbolical of strength, of intelligence, omniscience. So many Christians, similarly without a wish to infract a divine law, are disposed to take too great liberties and to introduce to too large a degree their own conceptions in divine worship—without sufficient care to hold to the exact instructions of the divine message. This is always a mistake, by whomsoever committed.

The only wise, proper course for any is to take heed particularly to the Word of the Lord, and to allow themselves little if any liberty beyond the very letter of that Word. Thus today we see in the religious services of various denominations how, little by little, the simplicity of the apostolic pattern for the Church and its worship has been departed from. Some have taken little liberties, some have taken great liberties, with the result that some have departed a little and others have departed a great deal from the divine standard, and always to their injury. The lesson to Spiritual Israelites here should be, "See that thou make all things after the pattern that I showed thee in the holy mount." If we need divine instruction at all on the subject we need to follow those instructions carefully, explicitly. Let us remember that we cannot improve upon them, that any alteration means injury to us.

The Dangers of Expediency

We cannot suppose that Aaron fully sympathized with the people in the matter of this making of the golden calf; we must suppose that he knew better and meant better, and that it was a mere expedient on his part to hold in check the rebellion of the people whose discontent was manifest in this demand. We must suppose that, in apparently acquiescing in the demand, Aaron was seeking to gain time until Moses would return. Possibly, too, his demand that the people produce their earrings and other ornaments of gold was originally a mere subterfuge; that he hoped by making this demand they would draw back and decline to part with their ornaments, and that thus he would be able to say, "Well, I cannot make you what would represent a god except out of gold, and I have no gold for the purpose unless you sacrifice your jewelry." But, however good his intentions, the lesson for us is that his course was an improper one.

Spiritual Israelites should **never** take this position—should never say, let us do evil that good may result, let us yield some principles for the sake of harmony and the good of the cause. Alas, this seems to be the difficulty with the leaders of God's people all through the ages. The fear of man, that bringeth a snare, has interfered with the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom. All Spiritual Israelites should learn, should fix it in their hearts, that while moderation and a disposition to be obliging and helpful and considerate of the wishes of others are prominent elements of Christian grace and to be cultivated, nevertheless **the principles of the divine law are never to be infracted, nor even compromised for the sake of blessing others. We are to remember that when great emergencies arise God is superior to every one of them,** and they can never be understood as his voice commanding us to violate the principles of righteousness which he has set before us. We are to do our duty in harmony with his law as kindly, as gently, as wisely as possible, and leave all the results to him—the Almighty. Whatever others may do, however others may think or compromise, let us take the Apostle's standpoint and say, "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." (2 Cor. 13:8.) Our consciences will not permit us to compromise where principles are involved, though we should gladly be the readiest of all to compromise where principle is not involved.

The Cost of Wrong-Doing

People usually are attracted to wrong-doing by the thought that thus they escape difficulties or sufferings, or thus they gain advantages and blessings. But this is only a theory; as a matter of fact it is the reverse, every misdeed is costly. The Israelites stripped themselves of their jewels to carry out their misguided religious sentiments. And how often we see this amongst Spiritual Israelites! How many, in their worshiping of a sect or denomination, will strip themselves of some of their most valuable possessions! How many sacrifice to these idols what God has not directed! idols which are set up contrary to the instructions of his Word—devoting to them time, influence, money—time which should be devoted to a pure worship of God, based upon a study and better understanding of his Word; influence which should be exerted in a very opposite direction, to a maintenance of the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and to a fellowship with those who are seeking to **stand fast** in that liberty; money which should be spent in building up the most holy faith once delivered to the saints, and in putting down the strongholds of error, the golden calf of ignorance and superstition!

And undoubtedly many ministers and many of the more intelligent amongst the Lord's people of all denominations realize that Churchianity is merely a golden calf, unworthy of the reverence and worship accorded to it. Undoubtedly many of this more intelligent class, represented in Aaron, reluctantly join in the various sectarian practices and customs which have a form of godliness and deny its power. They should be more courageous if they would be overcomers; they must learn this lesson, and come out from among them and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing, (2 Cor. 6:17); and again, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues." —Rev. 18:4.

Many Idols in Christendom

While Churchianity is the idol which more nearly in our day corresponds to the golden calf, there are many more idols to which professed Christians are bowing the knees of their hearts. Chief amongst these is Mammon, the god of wealth, of money. O, how many forget the instructions of the Word, that we are to seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and to be content with such things as God's providence will grant us along these lines. How many are anxious to have something better in this world than God's providence has accorded them; how many have the love of money, of which the Apostle spoke in his day—the root of all evil, which some coveting after have stumbled and pierced themselves through with many arrows.—1 Tim. 6:10.

Yes, indeed! this idol has many votaries today, more perhaps than ever before, and the worship of Mammon is being encouraged on every hand—the poor are almost despised, the wealthy highly esteemed. The successful worshipers of Mammon, who receive his marks of approval in prosperity, are everywhere welcomed in society and Churchianity. We are not denouncing wealth or the wealthy; we are reprehending the love, the idolatry of the wealthy, that it is set up as the standard of human ambition—nay, almost as the standard of Christian ambition; whereas, on the contrary, God has declared that not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many noble, not many rich, will inherit the Kingdom; hence not many of the wealthy are identified with the true Israel of God.

There are other idols, too, of name and fame and pride, that call for their toll from their worshipers. Each one of these idols calls for its devotees to break off their golden earrings, their advantages, their riches of time and influence, etc., for their service. Does it not behoove every Israelite indeed to make an inspection of his own heart to see to what extent there are any idols there, and to cast them out, that his worship may be of sincerity for the Lord alone? This idol-breaking may properly include the idolatry of **persons,** whether it be of Luther or Calvin or Knox in the past or of earthly leaders in the present time. Saint John the revelator is represented as falling down to worship before the angel who showed him certain things in respect to the divine plan, and the angel is caused to reprove him for it, saying, "See thou do it not: I am of thy brethren . . . Worship God."

So every proper leader, in whatever degree of influence, should see to it that worship is not tendered to him without a rebuke. However well-intentioned the homage may be, it must be reproved, because there is but one proper object of adoration for the Lord's people—God himself; "Worship God." Fellow-creatures may be honored, respected, esteemed, as the Scriptures direct, "Honor to whom honor is due, tribute to whom tribute is due." But God is to be recognized as the source of all our blessings, joys, advantages, comfort. If God has been pleased to make use of any of his children for the blessing of others, it would not be improper for us to rejoice in the Lord's providence and to acknowledge the same; but in every case the Lord must be recognized as the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Had he not given the aid through one channel or servant he could and would have given it through another. Hence to him belongs the praise of the glorious plan of salvation, and of our share therein and of our knowledge of it.

"He built an Altar Before It"

Evils are progressive: one wrong leads to another. Thus, after the golden calf had been made the next thing in order was to make a golden altar before it to offer sacrifice to it. So it is in respect to the idols of Spiritual Israel. An altar always implies a sacrifice, and it is but the natural thing that we should sacrifice to whatever we set up in our hearts as our idol. As we have already pointed out, some hearts have many idols, others a few, and it is not difficult to determine which idols a man worships. The worship will be indicated by the sacrifice. Tell us the things to which a man or a woman sacrifices his or her best thoughts, best time, chief influence, and we can tell you readily the idol which he reverences most and before which he has the largest altar and sacrifices most.

Each should be most interested in examining this question from the standpoint of his own heart; each should say to himself, "To whom do I render the sacrifice of my heart? Where are my chief affections? To whom or to what do I render sacrifices of the most precious things I possess?" The laws of nature require that a certain proportion of our time be spent in sleep; with many a considerable proportion is necessary for earthly toil, for the procurement of the things needful and the things honest and necessary for the present life. A certain proportion is also necessary for our personal convenience, partaking of food and care for our bodies. It would be easy to use the entire twenty-four hours in this way, for the tendency of our day is to greater and greater extravagance in every direction and to consider the luxuries of the past as the necessities of the present. Hence every hour of the twenty-four taken from the affairs of this life might be considered as in some sense of the word sacrificed.

Some divide their sacrifices, putting part upon the altars of their various idols; but the true Christian, enlightened by the Word of the Lord, must abandon all of these idols, and must realize that he has very little at most to present as a living sacrifice to the Lord. If he can save or redeem one hour a day or more, this should be recognized as a part of his reasonable service to the Lord and should be conscientiously devoted day by day if he would attain the divine favor and blessing for the life that now is and for that which is to come. As the steward of his gifts to the Lord he may use some of his time and influence in his own spiritual development along the lines of the divine Word. Another portion he may devote to the assistance of the brethren, building them up in the most holy faith, and thus strengthen incidentally his own faith. Other portions of this sacrificed time and means he may use in ministering to the sick or to assisting others along temporal lines, doing good to all men as he has opportunity, especially to the household of faith. But his sacrifices must not be made to persons nor things nor churchly systems, but to God, and be appropriately used according to his best ability to understand the divine will through the teachings of the divine Word.

The Breaking of the Law

At the end of the forty days Moses came down from the mountain bearing the table of the Law written in stone, and, beholding the idolatry, he dashed the table of stone to pieces, symbolically representing the failure of Israel to keep the Covenant of the Law, and the impossibility of the fallen race ever being justified by the Law Covenant. After Moses had reproved the people and chastened the more wilful and explained to them their sin more fully, he went up into the mountain again to the Lord, acting as their mediator. In this connection we have introduced to us the grandeur of Moses' character, his unselfishness, his love for his brethren in all their weakness. The Lord proposed to Moses to cut off Israel as a nation, and to make of Moses and his family the nation that he would bless as the seed of Abraham. But Moses, faithful to his trust as a mediator who had undertaken to represent the people before God and to represent God before the people, declined the Lord's offer, and pleaded for the people, as mediator.

All of this, we may be sure, was intended as a type of how Christ Jesus, as the better Mediator of the New Covenant, would be loyal to his trust and stand for and represent the whole human family before God faithfully, notwithstanding their sinful condition, alienation and disobedience. Moses' language is most pathetic—"And now wilt thou blot out their sin, and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written." As Moses here staked his own eternal existence for the benefit of the people, so the life of Christ was staked for the race whom he died to redeem, and whom he represents and will continue to represent as its Mediator until he shall, under the terms of the New Covenant, grant to Israel and to all mankind restitution and full opportunity to return to divine favor. The course of Moses was pleasing to the Lord, and as the Mediator for the people he was directed to lead them on and bring the faithful to the promised land. Nevertheless the people who shared in the wrongdoing received a measure of chastisement.

The spirit of Moses was not only typical of the Spirit of Christ, but illustrative also of the spirit of all who will be members of the Body of Christ. We, too, must have this spirit of love and devotion, not merely to the members of the Body of Christ, our own Body, but a devotion to the mission, the work, to which in God's providence we have been called. "Ye know your calling, brethren." God has called us to be joint-heirs with his Son, to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, to be participators with him in the great work of mediating the New Covenant, and under its blessed provisions assisting and uplifting the world of mankind and leading them during the Millennial Age along the highway of holiness to absolute perfection and eternal life at its further end—so many as will obey. It is for us to have the spirit of Moses, the Spirit of Christ in respect to this matter—to so far as possible measure up to the glorious privileges and calling which are ours, and in the present time to do all in our power, in harmony with the Lord's providential leadings, for the blessing and uplifting of mankind in general, for their guidance in the right way, but especially to prepare ourselves for the glorious work of the coming age.

Chief amongst the elements of our preparation will be the spirit of sympathetic love which will enable us to be copies of our dear Master, who was kind to the unthankful and full of mercy and good fruits. Let us take this higher plane of thought in respect to our relationship to the world. Our Master declared, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." We are members of the Christ—members of the great Mediator, undergoing schooling and preparation for the great work before us of leading the people into the promised land of God's favor and life eternal—Paradise restored. If we do not learn the necessary lessons, if we do not become copies of God's dear Son, in sympathy, in love, in benevolence toward the world, we will be rejected from membership in the glorious Body, the Kingdom class, as unfit, the non-elect. Let us, then, give diligence, and remember that the great lesson to be learned is that of love—for God, for the brethren, for our neighbors, yea, for our enemies. If this love abound in us it shall make us neither barren nor unfruitful in God's sight, and so through Christ an abundant entrance shall be granted us into the everlasting Kingdom as associates with the King of kings and Lord of lords in his great work as the world's Mediator, the Mediator of the New Covenant, under which all the families of the earth are to be blessed.—Z. '07 : 203-206.

The Heart More Important Than the Head

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.—Prov. 4:23.

WE realize that our heads need keeping: and some of us at one time might have been inclined to say, "Keep thy head with all diligence, in line with the doctrines of Christ, and thy heart will be all right, for God will keep it." This, however, is a mistake. God has stated the matter correctly. We are not competent to keep our heads. We are competent and responsible for the keeping of our hearts. If we diligently keep, watch, guard our hearts from evil, and in full harmony with the Divine Word and its spirit of the Truth, righteousness, love, God will do the rest. He will guide our imperfect reasoning faculties, and we shall know his doctrines.

Keeping the heart signifies keeping guard over our sentiments. It signifies a critical inspection of every motive of life. Why do we speak? What is the object desired? Why do we do this, or not do that thing? Is the motive honorable, just, loving? Do we love righteousness? Do we hate iniquity? Is the love of God being more and more shed abroad in our hearts? Is it increasing God-ward and manward, and toward the brethren? This is watching, "keeping our hearts," and implies that if a selfish thought or motive or ambition be found lurking anywhere, or seeking to guide in act or word, it should be promptly expelled—that the heart may be pure, clean. Keeping the heart means also activities in love, benevolence, helpfulness and the cultivation of thoughts and sentiments in accord with the Divine. It means not only the purifying of the heart, but the garnishing of it with the fruits and graces of holiness and love, that it may be acceptable to the Lord. So surely as injustice or sin or impurity is harbored to any extent, the heart is proportionately defiled and proportionately unacceptable to the Lord, and in the way leading towards repudiation by him.

The words, "the issues of life," would remind a lawyer of the fact that when a case is tried in court the jurors are sworn to do their duty in respect to the issue joined—the decision to be reached. So all of the Lord's consecrated people are on trial. The issue has been joined. It means, (1) life or death eternal: and (2) additionally to those who win life there is another issue, namely, whether that life eternal shall be on the highest plane—of the divine nature and Joint-Heirship with Christ—or on the lower spirit plane of the Great Company—like unto the angels. Do we realize the issue joined in this trial, the outcome of which is so vital? If we do, and if we believe the Lord's declaration that the issue or result will depend upon our heart condition, then we see a reason why we should use "all diligence" in keeping our hearts pure, sweet, tender, loving, "a copy, Lord, of thine."

Once, when our eyes of understanding began to open and we discerned the length and breadth and height and depth of love Divine and the wonderful Plan of Salvation, we inclined to think that the number who would fail to attain life everlasting, either in this age or in the Millennium, would be a small number. We would even have inclined to the Universalist view that all would ultimately be saved, had it not been for certain texts of Scripture which clearly intimate that, according to the Divine foreknowledge, there would be some who would die the Second Death, as a result of the "sin unto death"—"There is a sin unto death: I do not say that ye shall pray for it."—1 John 5:16.

But as we have become more and more familiar with the mind of the Lord as presented to us in his Word, we discern that none will be granted eternal life, except they shall attain a certain character development, and that that character development means not merely an outward loyalty and restraint from sin, but a heart loyalty and love for righteousness, and hatred toward iniquity. During the Millennium outward perfection will be the standard, yet ultimately in the end of that age, the heart development will be the test, which will determine who may go beyond to eternal life, and who may not.

The heart test may now be said to be the only one, because our flesh, justified, then consecrated to death, is not the New Creature which hopes for glory, honor and immortality, but merely its imperfect servant or tool. The New Creature's heart or affections must be loyal to the very highest principles of Justice and Love, and, according to its development along these lines, will be the Divine decision for life or for death—on some plane or on no plane of being. The Great Company must have the Christ-like character, as well as the Little Flock and as well as the Restitution class at the end of the Millennium. We are not to understand that there will be, for any of the consecrated, any further trial or education or development or testing after the present trial is ended. No one will be in either the Little Flock or the Great Company except those who are in loving loyalty to God, to the brethren, to the principles of righteousness. All others will be condemned as unfit for life eternal upon any plane of being.

Perhaps the worldly might say to us, It must be a great strain upon you and make your life miserable to be obliged to think continually of the right or the wrong of every act and every word and every thought, and to be obliged to repudiate and disown every sentiment not entirely just and loving. We reply, that at first it might have so appeared to us, but the Lord leads his people gently, graciously, step by step, to an appreciation of the principles of righteousness and love. Following on to know the Lord means, to such, continual growth in grace as well as in knowledge. We are glad that we see distinctly the issue joined in our case—that it is for life or death. To us this is the chief consideration—the making of our calling and our election sure, to life eternal. As we get a glimpse of the wonderful things which God has in reservation for those who love him—earthly pleasures, self-denials, self-sacrifices, all lose their weight and power—and gradually we come to the place where we "delight" to know and to do the Lord's will—to the mental attitude in which these Divine regulations are not grievous to us, but really joyous. This means that our minds have been "transformed," so that the things which we once loved, now we hate; and the things which once we hated now we love. Yet we approached this high position gradually. . . .

Life Unto Life or Death Unto Death

The Apostle, contemplating the situation of those who have been saved by faith, through the knowledge of the Lord, and of his gracious plans, declares that the message becomes to such a life or a death message. The demands of our consecration to some appear onerous, burdensome. They have an odor of death that repels them, and leads on to Second Death. To others the ways of the Lord and the requirements of his holiness have a sweet odor, a life odor, bringing refreshment. Such an appreciation of the Divine goodness and of the Divine Plan, the Apostle refers to as a sweet odor of life, and tending and leading up to the glorious life condition which they shall share in the Resurrection of the blessed.

The Apostle realized that the message he was preaching would have one or the other effect upon all who had the spiritual ears. It would be to them either a savour of life unto life or of death unto death. Then he adds, "Who is sufficient for these things?" (2 Cor. 2:16.) There is a tremendous strain of responsibility upon all who minister the Lord's Truth. Who is sufficient for these things? How can any of us fully grasp and comprehend the value of present opportunities? And how can those who, in the name of the Lord, present his message sufficiently realize the weight of responsibility attaching?

Summing up, then, let us each know that if we do not keep our hearts from the leaven of malice, envy, hatred and strife, the issue with us will be the Second Death, and in the interim assuredly we would lose much of the light and spiritual blessings which we once enjoyed. If, on the other hand, we keep out the evils referred to, and put on the graces of the Lord's Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love—the decision in our case will be life, eternal life. And in the interim, while waiting for our resurrection "change," our experience will be continual growth in grace, in love, and in knowledge of the things freely given of the Lord to such as are in this heart condition. These shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make them free—not with the freedom of the unregenerate, but with the liberty of the sons of God—liberty to do right; liberty to suffer injustice for righteousness sake; liberty to lay down our lives for the brethren, and, in general, for the Truth, and in doing good to all men as we have opportunity.

"Take Heed to Yourselves"

The Apostle's words to the Elders of the Ephesus Church never were more fitting to the people of God in general than they are today. He said to them, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with the blood of his own Son. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore, watch and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."—Acts 20: 28-31.

The Elders everywhere need to take special heed; because in every trial the most favored and most prominent have the severest besetments and tests. Hence the Apostle exhorts, "Be not many of you teachers, brethren, knowing that a man shall receive the more severe testing." We, likewise, exhort all the Elders who in heart are pure, unselfish, that they have nothing but love and good wishes for all mankind, and that they become more and more filled with the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit, taking heed also to the flock. Remember, that the flock is the Lord's and that you have a responsibility to the Lord, as well as to them. Remember, that you are to watch for their souls (interests) as those who must give an account to the Great Chief Shepherd. Remember, that the principal thing is Love, in all; and, while not neglecting doctrines, give special heed to the development of the Lord's Spirit amongst the various members of his Body, that thus they may become "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," and, according to the Divine will, be not suffered to stumble in this evil day, but, having done all, to stand complete in Christ, his Body, his Members, his Joint-Sacrificers, his Joint-Heirs.—Z. '09: 71-73.

A Soldier of the Cross

2 Timothy 4: 7.

Golden Text:—"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

WAS there ever a nobler soldier of the Cross than St. Paul—the Redeemer alone excepted? Soldiers of fortune and patriots have indeed left their marks in the world and on the pages of history, but not one of them has left so indelible a mark as St. Paul. The motive power influencing others has generally been selfishness. But the motive power of the Christian is the reverse —love. Others hazarded and laid down their lives in self-interest, or in the interest of their kin or tongue. St. Paul, copying his Master, laid down his life for Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female, to assist in gathering the "elect" to be the Bride of Christ—that ultimately through the glorified King and his glorified Bride, all the families of the earth may receive the blessing which God waits to give to "all the families of the earth, through Abraham's Seed."—Gal. 3: 29.

St. Paul's courageous life reminds us of the words of the poet:—

> "Be not like dumb, driven cattle,
> Be a hero in the strife."

God is seeking only for heroes now. By and by he will deal with the remainder, helpfully. The "elect" must all be courageous, "conformed to the image of his Son"—heroes. Hence the promises to the Church are "to him that overcometh."

When writing the words of our study St. Paul realized that the close of his career was near—his course was finished.

He recognized as a Christian that he had certain lessons to learn in the School of Christ and this was a part of his course of preparation for joint-heirship with Christ in the glories of the Millennial Kingdom.. The course included not merely theory, but also practice. He not only theoretically learned about Christ, but experimentally. He became a partaker with him in the sufferings of this present time. And sympathetically he was permitted to enter into a large degree of knowledge of the "mystery" of the Divine Plan hidden from the world.

Not only had his own course of instruction been a thorough one, but he had been given a post-graduate course as an ambassador for his Lord and Redeemer and as an Apostle for the brethren, the Church. Moreover, he recognized the fact that all such as became members of the Body of Christ are so directly under the Divine supervision and regulations that their times are in God's hand—all of their affairs of life, temporal and spiritual. As the Master's death could not occur "until his hour was come," so likewise it is with his consecrated members.

He had kept the faith and the faith had kept him. Many do not realize how important are knowledge and a correct faith. "My people perish for lack of knowledge" is the Lord's testimony. And their faith can keep pace only with their knowledge, for faith must have a basis. A correct life depends greatly upon a correct faith. Why did our forefathers burn one another at the stake in a diabolical manner? Because they were governed by error. False doctrines, styled by the Apostle "doctrines of devils," had been presented to them and they had believed them. And the legitimate outcome of the wrong belief, the wrong faith, was wrong doing. Believing that God purposed the torture of his creatures for centuries in Purgatory or for untellable millions of years in eternal torment, they copied the misconception of the Almighty in their lives, to our horror.

But St. Paul had kept the faith—the true faith once delivered unto the saints—faith in the Redeemer's sacrifice; faith in its application on our behalf; faith in our justification by the Father on that account; faith in the glorious promises of God's Word; faith in the Lord and faith in the brethren. Surely it means something to keep the faith—especially when we realize that our great Adversary, Satan, is on the alert continually to take it from us or turn or twist it to our loss or injury.

The crown mentioned, the Apostle had seen for many years with the eye of his faith as a part of the Lord's promise. He had absolute confidence in the Lord and in the promise he had received from him. That crown had been his cause of rejoicing for many years, not because of pride or ambition, but because of love and benevolence. He would love to receive that crown because it would be the mark of Divine appreciation and love for him; and a mark of his faithfulness. He esteemed it because it would afford him untold opportunity of blessing his fellowmen in association with his Lord and the brethren on the plane of glory during the Millennium. . . .

St. Paul closes his exhortation by reciting that in his trial before Nero some in whom he had full confidence had forsaken him, and he concludes that the Lord, nevertheless, stood with him and strengthened him and that he had every confidence in his care to the end of the way.—Z. '09:374, 375.

Courageous and Timid Servants of God

I. Kings 18:1-16.

"I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth."

IN the third year of Elijah's sojourn at Zarephath—the fourth year without rain—really three and a half years after Elijah's pronouncement to King Ahab (Luke 4:25; James 5:17)—the Lord sent his Prophet back into the land of Israel to Ahab. A less courageous man than Elijah might have hesitated, for he doubtless had knowledge of the fact that the king had instituted a search for him in every direction, probably with the intention of securing his revocation respecting the cessation of rain—of having him break the spell upon the weather and bringing rain—or to put him to death in the event he did not do so, or both. Elijah seems to have been a most courageous servant of the Lord in executing whatever commands he received from the great King, and in the present instance he would be encouraged with the thought that his mission to Ahab would be a most acceptable one, since the Lord had assured him that the due time had come for the sending of rain. Doubtless the Prophet, too, as a lover of humanity and particularly of his nation, would have both a humane and appropriate sentiment that he would be pleased to serve in such a manner.

The famine, which was over all the land of Israel, was keenly felt at the capital city, Samaria. The king was finally aroused to an appreciation of the fact that something must be done or soon all the cattle would die of thirst. Apparently he was more solicitous for his beasts than for the poor of the people. The dying of his herds and the dying of his horses and mules would impair his power and dignity as a king as well as his wealth. Hence the proposition to seek for springs or brooks not yet dried up, where water could be found for the king's beasts. He sent the chief servant of his palace, one in whom he had absolute confidence, in one direction, while he himself, probably with a good retinue of servants, etc., went in another direction.

Obadiah, the Timid Servant

Obadiah, who was intrusted with this service, we are informed, was a true worshiper of the Lord—not only so, but one who at the risk of his own life had protected the lives of a hundred of the prophets of the Lord on an occasion when the Queen, Jezebel, had ordered the slaughter of all such. Obadiah, therefore, should be reckoned not only as a true and noble, but also as a courageous servant of God in some respects, and yet we note a wide difference between his disposition and courage and that of Elijah. That he maintained his position in the king's family not only implies that his loyalty to the Lord made him a trusted and useful man in the king's service, but it implies also that in a household so given up to idolatry, he must have in a large measure put his light under a bushel and avoided the advocacy of the Truth, else he never would have been acceptable and retained his position. We may be sure that the king, and specially the queen, never knew that their chief servant had negatived the commanded death of one hundred prophets.

Comparing the characters of these two servants of the Lord, Elijah and Obadiah, we can find items to commend in both, but especially in Elijah. It is not for us to condemn Obadiah, and indeed, we have no doubt that the Lord gave him in his life-time a blessing or reward for his service to his cause, and that he will give him a still further blessing and reward in the future. But if we would have before our minds the proper example to be followed, the proper courage to be exercised, our pattern would be Elijah, whose loyalty to God was so thoroughly attested on every possible occasion. There are Christians of both of these types today, but Elijah stands for or represents the little flock with whom the Lord is specially pleased and who will with the Redeemer constitute the Kingdom class by and by. We rejoice also with the believers, the partially consecrated ones, represented by Obadiah, yet we could sincerely wish for them the blessing of greater zeal in the Lord's service—less care for the friendship of those who are God's enemies and greater boldness in the advocacy of the Lord's cause and in proclaiming themselves in every proper manner his servants. We fear for such that being ashamed of the Lord to some extent, preferring advantages as respects the present life—to be in a prominent position, in good society, and surrounded by luxury maintained at the expense of a failure to properly confess the Lord—will mean to such eventually the loss of the great prize for which we are called to run in this present life. As already intimated, our expectation would be that such a class would eventually get a blessing from the Lord and a good position; but such a class surely, unless they turn about and become more courageous, will lose the great prize for which we have been called to run—joint-heirship with God's dear Son in the Kingdom.

Elijah, the Courageous

While en route in quest of the springs, etc., Obadiah met Elijah and at once recognized him as the special servant of the Lord and prostrated himself at his feet, saying, "Is it thou, my Lord, Elijah?" and he answered, "It is I. Go tell thy Lord Ahab that I am here." Immediately Obadiah's fear and caution came upon him as he thought of how Ahab would be anxious to find Elijah, and he surmised that Elijah would in some manner disappear during his absence and that in consequence the king's anger would be against his servant Obadiah, believing that he had deceived him in the matter or because he had not insisted on bringing Elijah as a captive to the king, knowing that he was searching for him. He feared that Elijah was thus inclined to do him injury, and related to the prophet that he was a servant of the true God and not an idolater, and that he had protected one hundred young men of the school of the prophets, delivering them from death because of reverence for the Lord. Elijah assured him that this was not his intention, and that he would without question meet Ahab. His word was believed and the meeting of the king and the Prophet resulted.

When the king arrived where Elijah was he saluted the latter in a bold manner, implying that all the trouble that had come upon the nation was properly chargeable to him, and that he should feel guilty of it. The king ignored the Lord's hand in the matter and ignored his own responsibility. He was a very different type of man from either of the others discussed in this lesson. Elijah was courageous for the Lord and for the Truth; Obadiah was less courageous and in some respects weak-kneed—lacking many of the qualities approved of the Lord; but Ahab was bold and defiant of the Lord and his Prophet, and after all the experiences through which himself and his nation had passed for three and a half years, his salutation to Elijah was, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Elijah met him on his own ground exactly and replied, No, it was the king who troubled Israel through the institution of idolatry. The king's boldness appears to have wilted in the presence of the Prophet's lance-like thrust of the Truth, and the latter, assuming the place of command as the Lord's representative, ordered the gathering of the chiefest of the people of Israel from every quarter and with them all of the prophets of Baal, to meet at Mount Carmel. This evidently was a challenge as between the forces of Baal, represented by the king and government and all the heads of the ten tribes and all the prophets of Baal, and the one Prophet representing Jehovah.

Evidently King Ahab was considerably humbled by the experiences through which he had passed, and was now hopeful that at last the difficulties were to reach a conclusion. Doubtless the Prophet had told him that this was his mission, to bring blessings and refreshment through rain. At all events, there seems to have been no parley on the king's part, but a prompt compliance with the Prophet's demands.

The principal lesson we see in this narrative is that of character and positiveness on the part of those who profess to be the Lord's people. It is not sufficient that we should not sympathize with Ahab's course of violence and opposition to the Lord and subserviency to his wife Jezebel, the head and leader of the idolatrous worship. It is not sufficient for us, either, to copy after Obadiah's course and to serve and fear the Lord in secret, even though in secret also we strive to do good to some of the Lord's people. Obadiah's course is very much more honorable than that of Ahab, but still it is not sufficient. We all want to copy the general courage and loyalty of Elijah, who is particularly a type of all the Lord's favored ones of this Gospel age.

—Z. '04: 220-222.

The Different Forms of Evils

"Abstain from every form of evil."—1 Thess. 5:22.

In the Revised Version the word **appearance** is rendered **form**—"abstain from every **form** of evil." Evils have different forms. Sometimes they are crude and repulsive forms; sometimes they are attractive forms. No matter what the form, if we know the thing to be evil, sinful, injurious, either to ourselves or to others, we are to abstain from it. The Apostle has enumerated some of these forms of evil, namely, "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like, of the which I have told you before, that they that do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-21.) He says that these are the works of the flesh and that they are **manifest**.

To Christians these forms of evil must be very repulsive, because to be a Christian at all, one must have the New Mind. And the New Mind, in proportion as it is developed, will cleave to that which is good. We are to remember, however, the Scriptural admonition that all of these grosser evils have, for the Christian, a more refined form, as, for instance, when our Lord declared that "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." This is quite a fine line of distinction that applies to the Christian. We can see that that spirit in a Christian which would content itself with hating, instead of killing, a brother would be a very evil condition for the heart and would mean death to the New Creature.

Our Lord defines adultery as not merely the outward act, but also the having of an adulterous feeling in the **heart**—the having of a purpose or willingness in the heart. Hence the New Creature, taking this standpoint, should be earnest and zealous to guard his heart. And so with Covetousness. It is covetous to be discontented with what we have and desirous of obtaining what others have. This is one form of **selfishness,** and the spirit of selfish desires is evil. In fact, we might say that every form of evil, so far as we can discern, is a form of selfishness. No evil thing that we can think of in humanity would be apart from selfishness—the desire to have something, to be something. These things, leading on to their culmination, would mean a desire to be a usurper of power—to grasp things that are not our own—an improper condition of lust for power, lust for wealth, etc.

Actions, Words and Thoughts

Evils may be summed up into three forms—actions, words and thoughts. Evil actions are those which would be easily discerned by others. Evil words might not be quite so manifest. Evil thoughts, along any of the lines referred to by the Apostle, or along any other lines, are injurious, sinful, and should be abstained from. If, by reason of the weaknesses we have inherited and which belong to our mortal body, we be not fully able to master these evil propensities, we must show God that we are striving against them to the best of our ability. And as to what is the ability of each, is for himself and God to determine.

We should abstain not only from the evil things, but we should also seek to abstain from every **appearance** of evil. We should abstain, so far as possible, from doing things that we know to be good, if our friends or neighbors might misunderstand and consider these things to be evil. In order that our influence for the Truth may be the greater, we should avoid, not only evil in its every form, but everything that has an evil appearance.

To our mind, **evil thinking** is one of the greatest evils with which God's people have to contend. They can restrain actions and words to a considerable extent and they are, as the Apostle says, to seek to bring also every **thought** into obedience to the will of Christ. This does not mean that an evil thought would not cross the pathway of the mind. But the character of the thought should be discerned, whether it is mean or hurtful, and if so, it should be considered as a deadly foe and immediately a warfare should be waged against it, lest it fasten itself in some degree.

Has the Apostle suggested an impossibility when he says, "Abstain from every form of evil"? It is possible for us to abstain as New Creatures, to be out of sympathy with all forms of evil—to be antagonistic thereto. But on account of the imperfections of the flesh, one may not always be able to do this actually. The flesh is merely **reckoned** dead. It is the duty of the New Creature to see that the evil thought is battled against, if, indeed, it should ever attain full development. It is to wage this warfare against sin that we have enlisted with the great Captain of our salvation. He showed his own fidelity to righteousness and is the Father's Agent for abolishing sin.

And it is for those who would walk in the Master's footsteps to join in this crusade against sin. The first place to begin the crusade is in our own minds, in our own dealings. The Scriptures tell us to fight a good fight in our own flesh—not against sin in someone else. And to this our Lord refers when he warns us to overcome in ourselves ambition, pride, lasciviousness, etc.—not to let them conquer us as New Creatures. We are to conquer these things in the fallen flesh, in which we all share—some more and some less. According to our zeal we will have the Lord's approval. And according to unfaithfulness in this matter, we shall lack that approval.

All who serve the Lord's cause in any capacity should seek to keep their **bodies under** and live after the manner of the teachings of the Scriptures—and they will be blessed proportionately as they do this. And in proportion as they are less careful, they will be less blessed—less skilful in the service of the truth.—Z. '10: 392, 393.

The Love Required of the New Creation

"If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."—1 John 4:12.

THERE IS a great difference between human or animal love, such as the members of a family have for one another, and that love to which this text refers. The love required of members of the Body of Christ is a love resulting from mutual relationship to the Lord, and comes from the Spirit of God dwelling in them—a God-like love, which marks them as of His Spirit, having been begotten to His disposition. There should be something about the character of the Lord's people which would demonstrate on all occasions that they possess true love for one another. If this is not the case the lack of love would be a reflection upon them all.

As we learn to love one another the love of God is being perfected in us, the true, benevolent love which the Lord commands. The Lord said that we should love one another as He has loved us—to the extent of being willing to lay down our lives for one another. We are not to love some of the brethren **some of the time, and some of the brethren all of the time**: but we should **love all of the brethren all of the time**: and overlook their frailties and imperfections, taking that high standpoint from which God views them, forgiving one another, as God, for Christ's sake, overlooks **our** blemishes. We ought to forgive those who trespass against us as we hope and trust that God will forgive our trespasses. No one can be of the "elect" class unless this love be perfected in him. He may not gain so full a control of the flesh that he will never speak sharply, hastily, etc., but he must reach the place where he will be perfect in intention before he can be accepted as a member of the Kingdom.

The Apostle Paul says that "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore, love is the fulfilling of the Law." (Rom. 13:10.) The Divine Law which the Apostle had specially before his mind was the Law given to Israel—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might": and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18.) This Law of God fulfilled—filled full, completely met—requires that the heart shall be full of love. All the mind and soul and strength are required to fulfil this Law. "**Love** worketh no ill to his neighbor." Yet one might work ill through ignorance and superstition and misunderstanding, through imperfection of the flesh, while his heart intentions were good. Saul of Tarsus worked much ill to his neighbors. With good intention, doubtless, some of our Catholic friends and some of our Protestant friends have worked ill to their neighbors. We cannot say that because they worked ill to their neighbors they had no love, but that they did not have it to the degree required by the Law: for **perfect love** would work **no ill** to his neighbor. Whoever would work ill to his neighbor, with full knowledge, would not have love.

Goes Beyond the Jewish Law

There is a force in the word **therefore** in the text, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, **therefore**, love is the fulfilling of the Law." The Law was given to restrain wrong deeds, wrong words, wrong sentiments toward another. That Law was evidently not intended to enumerate all the things that should not be done, for it **works no ill**. One might, therefore, fulfil the Law of the Ten Commandments if he works no ill to his neighbor, but loves him as himself. The word **therefore** gives us the thought that the Apostle had in mind the Jewish Law and not the Law of the New Creation. Merely abstaining from evil and loving our neighbor as ourselves would not fulfil the Law as given to the New Creature by the Lord; but it would fill the Law of Justice given to the Jews.

But our Lord magnified that Law and also gave us a **new** command. The Love that would be in His followers, His disciples, was shown in His words, "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12.) To do this would be far more than to do no injury to another. It would be laying **down our lives** for one another. This is far beyond any requirement of the Law. Justice could not say, "You must go over and clean the snow from your neighbor's pavement"; but Justice would say, "You must not throw any snow upon your neighbor's pavement." But Love says more than this. The new Law that is given to us is the Law of Sacrifice. We who are in the Body of Christ must love one another as Jesus loved us, to the extent of sacrificing our interests, our comforts, our privileges, in the interests of others.

He who does not find his heart in harmony with this Law of the New Creation—love, mercy, kindness, gentleness, goodness—lacks the evidence, or proof, that he is in any sense accepted of God as a joint-heir with Christ. If we have not love in our heart for the brethren, and the love of gentleness and benevolence toward all men, and even toward the brute creation, we have not the spirit which will carry us through in making the sacrifices necessary under present conditions. It will be only a question of time with such when the power of pride or vainglory holding them in the way of self-sacrifice will snap asunder and selfishness take full control. We are to keep the Law in our **minds**. But while our **minds are perfect**, we find imperfections of the flesh which hinder us from doing all that we wish to do. Hence, we need the sufficiency that is in Christ. We are trusting that God will accept the good intentions of the heart, of the mind, instead of counting against us the imperfections of our flesh.

An Aggressive as Well as Defensive Warfare Necessary

God would have us watch for evidences of His will and profit by all the experiences which He permits to come to us in our every-day life, humbly accepting any discipline; and having this spirit we shall be led on from grace to grace and from victory unto victory. Merely to stand and battle on the **defensive** is very wearisome and gains no victory. To gain the victory we must not only put on the whole armor of God, but we must be heroes in the strife and wage an **aggressive** warfare upon the lusts of the eye and flesh and pride of life and all the foes of righteousness and purity.

Love—love for the Lord, for the Truth and for righteousness—must inspire us or we shall never be victors. Love will keep us faithful even unto death and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Where fervent love rules in the heart it implies that the heart is **fully submitted** to the Lord, and that means that nine-tenths of the battle is already won. But even then, as the Apostle Jude says (Jude 21), we must **keep ourselves** in the love of God, in watchfulness and prayer and zeal; and grace will abound where love abounds.

We keep ourselves in the love of God by striving to do always those things that are pleasing to Him. He can love **only perfection**; and it is impossible for us to be perfect. He perceives, however, that our weaknesses are not of the will but of the flesh, and He has provided an Advocate for us to whom we may come if we commit trespasses. Thus we keep ourselves in the love of God and walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Where our footsteps may deviate from the way we have the precious blood of Jesus to cleanse us. When we have our new bodies we shall be continually in His love and always pleasing to Him, because we shall have no bodily imperfection to mar the perfection of our will.

Let Us Beware of Selfishness

Selfishness is the surest cause of separation from the love of God. When we made our consecration to the Lord and He accepted us as New Creatures in Christ and begat us with the Holy Spirit, it was because we surrendered **self**. If at any time we turn back to walk after the flesh, we are departing from our consecration. This might be manifest in many ways: in slackness instead of zeal; in carelessness instead of carefulness; in a selfish feeling of jealousy of spirit; or in anger, hatred, strife. All these are so much of the Old Creature—wrong conditions from which we thought we had escaped. In proportion as the Old Creature triumphs the New Creature will fall; and thus we will gradually cease to be in the love of God. These wrong conditions will hinder the keeping of ourselves in the love of God, which signifies the keeping of ourselves in the proper attitude toward God and Jesus. We are to press on and make our sacrifice, if possible, larger every way to the Lord and the brethren.

Daily and hourly we may keep ourselves in the Lord's love by obedience to the principles of righteousness and faithfulness to our covenant and a growing love for these. We are to rejoice in every experience of life—its trials, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the Lord shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which He has established and to which He requires our full and loyal heart-submission.

In such faithful obedience to the truth and earnest endeavor to conform to its principles, the way and the truth grow more and more precious and our willing feet with joy are led in the paths of righteousness and peace—into life everlasting.

—Z. '11: 205, 206.

Strength and Peace

"The Lord will give strength unto his people: the Lord will bless his people with peace."—Psa. 29:11.

AS WE look back over the years that have passed since first we learned to "know the joyful sound" of the true Gospel and consecrated ourselves fully to the Lord, we view with sorrow the imperfections of even our best efforts; and as looking forward we see the difficulties that seem to obstruct our onward course, we shall greatly need to reinforce our waning courage with the special promises of Divine grace to help in every time of need. Among others, we have the blessed assurance that "The Lord will give strength unto his people"; "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."—Psa. 50:15.

As soldiers under our great Captain, we have enlisted in no uncertain struggle, unless our own faint-heartedness or unfaithfulness should make it so. We are fully supplied with the whole armor of God, which will amply protect us against the fiery darts of the Adversary, if only we accept it and carefully buckle it on. We have with us the constant presence of our Captain, so long as we are closely following his leading. Above the din of battle his inspiring voice may be heard saying, "Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom"; "Be of good cheer; I have overcome!" Luke 12:32; John 16:33.) If we are weak and incline to faint-heartedness, we have only to remember the blessed promise, "The Lord will give strength unto his people"; and by our faithfulness we shall glorify God, who will deliver us from all our foes, both seen and unseen.

Like all others, the Lord's people need fortitude and patience, else they might soon become discouraged in the conflict with the world, the flesh, and the Adversary. They need strength; they need encouragement. In the text under consideration, the word **strength** means, in large measure, **courage**. The Lord will give **courage** to his people. He encourages us in a variety of ways; he encourages us through each other, as we build one another up in the most holy faith.

We, nevertheless, look to the individual, innate strength and to its importance. "Be of good courage, and he will strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." (Psa. 31:24.) We are assured that we shall be strengthened in the **"inner man"** through the Spirit of the Lord. None have this particular kind of strength, that of the "inner man," except those who have become New Creatures in Christ, to whom "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) With this particular Spirit-begotten class all of the Lord's dealings are intended to develop character.

Our **faith** is the basis of both our **strength** and our **peace**. No matter how fiercely the storms of life may assail us, we must never let go of our **anchor** and allow ourselves to drift; but always remember that "The foundation of God standeth sure"; that "His truth is our shield and buckler"; that "What he has promised he is able also to perform," notwithstanding our human imperfections and frailties; that, covering these, we have the imputed righteousness of Christ, our Surety and Advocate; that "The Father himself loveth us," and that "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust," and so has compassion for the sons of his love and is very pitiful and of tender mercy. (2 Tim. 2:19; Psa. 91:4; Rom. 4:21; John 16:27; Psa. 103:14.) Indeed, "What more **could** he say than to us he hath said" to assure our faith and to steady and strengthen our hearts to patient endurin the midst of the trials and conflicts in the ow way of sacrifice?

Vith abounding compassion and tenderness our d, on the last night of his earthly life, bestowed n his beloved disciples his parting blessing, his cy of **peace**. It was the richest legacy he had equeath, and was of priceless value. It was the nise of that tranquility of soul, that rest and ease nind which he himself possessed—the **peace of** l. It was the same peace which the Father has ays enjoyed, even in the midst of all the com- ion which the permission of evil has brought ut: but it was not derived from the same source. Jehovah, this peace is self-centered, because he lizes **in himself** omnipotence and Infinite wis- n: while the peace of Christ was centered, not **imself**, but in **God**, through faith in his wisdom, ver and grace. So also, if we would have the **ce of God**, the peace of Christ ("my peace"), it st, like his, be centered in God, by faith.

The peace promised is not the short-lived peace he world, which is sometimes enjoyed for a little son; but "my peace," the peace of God which rist himself by faith enjoyed, who, "Though he s rich, yet for our sakes became poor" (2 Cor.): who lost friend after friend, and in his last ur was forsaken by all of the few that remained— peace that endured through loss, persecution, rn and contempt, and even amidst the agonies of cross. This peace is something which none of vicissitudes of this life can destroy and which no emy can wrest from us.

"Marvel Not If the World Hate You"

"There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the cked." (Isa. 48:22.) "The wicked are like the ubled sea, continually casting up mire and dirt." eir hearts are not in accord with peace and hteousness, but are filled with selfishness. The cked are self-seeking and grasping: filled with ger if they cannot always get what they want: h malice if they see some one enjoying what they not have. All of these things indicate a lack of ce.

To the extent that any of the Lord's people have of these evil propensities they cannot have the ace of God, which passeth all understanding"— ch passeth all description. It is a rest of heart faith. In this peace lies a satisfaction for all the ious qualities of the mind; in proportion as the d develops the ambition of pleasing the Lord, of municating to others the knowledge of the th and the blessed opportunity of salvation, it omes our ambition to do good, instead of evil. ambition, being turned into a right line, the e of God, which none can comprehend save e who possess it, comes to the mind and heart.

t is not an outward peace, however, for the 's people, individually and collectively, have distressing experiences. The Church has ys been persecuted, as Jesus forewarned us: rvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you"; e were of the world, the world would love his but because ye are not of the world, but I chosen you out of the world, therefore the hateth you."—1 John 3:13; John 15:19.

"In the World Ye Shall Have Tribulation"

The peace promised is not such as the world can always recognize and appreciate, for the possessor of it, like the Lord and the Apostles and Prophets, may have a stormy pathway. **They** did not have peace **outwardly**. They were beset, harassed on every hand; they were persecuted and obliged to flee from place to place; some of the saints of old were stoned to death; some were sawn asunder. Yet the peace of God, abounding in their hearts, enabled them to endure all these trials joyfully. Indeed, that it must be so with all the faithful until all the purposes of God in the permission of evil are accomplished, we are distinctly forewarned, but with the assurance that through all the storms of life this peace shall abide—"In the world ye shall have **tribulation,**" but "in me ye shall have **peace.**"—John 16:33.

This promise, that God will give peace to his people, seems to apply only to a peace of heart. Our Lord and the Apostles possessed it to such an extent that they enjoyed themselves much more than did their enemies. While Paul and Silas were in prison they sang praises to God, instead of berating the governments and threatening what would be done to them; instead of butting their heads against the bars and saying, "God does not care for us; we will go about our own business, hereafter." So with us. In proportion as we see matters from the Divine viewpoint and appreciate the precious promises and let them inspire our hearts, we shall rejoice in those promises, and our hearts will be blessed. Even if we have trials and difficulties that we are not able to surmount, if these are working out for us the fruits and graces of the Spirit, we may rejoice and give thanks for these evidences of God's love.

"My Peace I Give Unto You"

We see that the peace of God is compatible with great commotion and with sorrow and pain of various kinds; for it is not dependent upon outward circumstances, but upon a proper balancing of the mind and the condition of a perfect heart. Such peace—the peace of God—was enjoyed by our Lord Jesus in the midst of all the turmoil and confusion of his eventful earthly life. And this brings us to the consideration of our Lord's last legacy to his disciples, when he was about to leave the world, as expressed in his own words: **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth** [in stinted measure or in perishable quality], **give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."**—John 14:27.

The promise in our text—"The Lord will bless his people with peace"—evidently belongs to this Age, when all creation groans and travails in pain. (Rom. 8:22.) When the Millennial Age shall have been ushered in, there will be prevailing conditions of peace and thus he will give peace to all people.

Let us, then, have for our watchword, "LOYALTY" to God and to the principles of righteousness; and let each of us write upon his heart the gracious promise—"The Lord will give **strength** unto his people." Let us be faithfully "his people," and let us earnestly desire and faithfully use the **strength** promised. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it": "He is faithful that promised."—1 Thess. 5:24; Heb. 10:23.

So then, if you lack the strength or the peace promised, the fault is **yours**, not **God's**. Either you have not the interests of his service closely enough at heart, or else you do not make use of the strength he provides. "The Lord will give **strength unto his people** (his trusting, faithful servants, those who are using to his praise the talents consecrated to their Master, however many or few those talents may be); the Lord will bless his people with peace."—Z. '11:150, 151.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

Not the Head of the Body is now to be crucified, but the members—especially the feet of the Body of Christ, yet upon the earth. The great adversary has blinded in a most marvelous manner some, of whom better things might have been expected. Our Lord's words are proving true—that his message would cause a measure of strife, which would thus reveal, manifest, those who are of a wrong spirit, but indirectly bring blessings to the faithful, who are willing to suffer with him and to lay down their lives for the brethren.—Z. '09:10, 11.

◆

Let us remember that our highest place is lying low, that the greatest mastery is self-mastery.—Z. '05:249.

◆

How it gives us an insight into our Lord's sympathetic nature, to find him thinking in the interest of others at the very time when he himself is overwhelmed in trouble! His own agony did not hinder him from thinking of his mother, and making provision for her comfort, commending her to the care of the loving disciple John. We thus see exemplified in the Master the teaching of the Scriptures that each should seek to make provision for his own dependent ones and, as the Apostle says, "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." (1 Tim. 5:8.) **"The faith"** includes thoughts of love, sympathy, interest and care for others, especially for them of the household of faith. We note the choice of John: it was doubtless because, first of all, of his loving tender disposition; secondly, his zeal for the Lord and the truth, and thirdly, his courage is pressing near to be with his dying Master in his closing hours, at the risk of his own life. Let us note these characteristics, as being those which the Lord approves.—Z. '99:127.

◆

Whoever comes into harmony with the divine arrangement will find such an ordering of divine providence as will bring him into touch with all others who are in fellowship with the Father and his glorious plan.—Z. '07:217.

◆

Which Spiritual Israelite can afford to retire at the close of the day without retrospectively calling to mind the goodness of the Lord and desiring his continued favor and protection in the shades of night? Which true Israelite will long be an Israelite indeed if he fail to acknowledge the Lord in all his ways, in his downlyings and his uprisings? As the Apostle says, whether we eat or whether we drink or whatsoever we do all should be done to his glory, and if in all our ways we will acknowledge him let us at the close of each day employ language somewhat similar to that of Moses and say to the Lord, Abide, O Lord, with all thy true Israel everywhere. Keep us, guard us, according to thy wisdom and thy love in Christ Jesus.—Z. '07:236.

◆

While giving each other credit for purity of heart and honesty of motives, the Lord's people learn that in their flesh dwelleth no perfection, and, likewise, none in the flesh of their brethren. Hence with the same love in our hearts, the one for the other, we have learned that it is better to allow each other full freedom and full responsibility as respects the management of earthly affairs, and that this is the condition in which each can be happiest, and in which each can make greatest progress and learn best the needed lessons of preparation for the Millennial Kingdom and its services.—Z. '09:26.

◆

The pebble from the brook—the message from the divine Word—vanquishes the enemy's power to those who have the sling of faith. To these the fortresses of sin are not so strong as to be invulnerable, unassailable; entrenched depravity is recognized as being subject to divine power, and when attacked in the name and strength of the Lord and encompassed repeatedly with prayer, finally its strong walls fall down as did those of Jericho. So may depraved appetites and sinful desires be thoroughly conquered so far as our hearts are concerned, though the traces thereof may continue to some extent in our mortal flesh—reminders not only of the weaknesses of the fallen nature, but also of the triumphs of the New Mind under the leadership of Jesus.—Z. '07:252.

◆

The very fact that the Lord has granted us the privilege of his fellowship is an assurance that there was something in us that he did not despise.—Z. '08:13.

◆

DWELLING WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

All of God's people can dwell together in love, in fellowship, under the divine care as a "royal priesthood" "seated together in heavenly places"—in the antitypical Tabernacle's "Holy." So far as our earthly abode is concerned we may today live comparatively closely, by virtue of the convenient railway and mail services. It behooves us all, therefore, to "speak often one to another" that, as the Prophet declares, the Lord may hear and note and prosper our blessing of one another. (Malachi 3:16.) And we suggest that it is a partial fulfilment of the injunction that we "make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way," if we seek such dwelling places as will conduce to our occasional interchanges with the household of faith. Let us put God first and Christian fellowship and growth in grace second and both before wealth in all of our reckonings. Thus we will best seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness and find all other things added in proportion to our real needs as New Creatures.—Z. '07:345.

◆

True, in the faithful fulfilling of a covenant of entire consecration to God there is much to endure in the way of reproach and persecution from the world (2 Tim. 3:12): but to such the Lord through the Prophet (Psa. 50:15) says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou (by thy testimony and faithfulness) shalt glorify me."

Psa. 50:16, 17. "But unto the wicked God saith" (The wicked here referred to are not people of the world: for according to verse 7, this testimony is borne against those who claim to be the Lord's people, and members of the spiritual house of Israel. These "wicked" are the covenant-breakers among those who still claim to be faithful people of God) —unto these God saith, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes (decrees, doctrines) or that thou shouldst take my covenant into thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee." The Lord will not hold them guiltless who, professing entire consecration to him, nevertheless despise instruction and cast his words behind them. —Z. '05:312, 313.

◆

In the present time our thirst is in one sense of the word insatiable—we are never satisfied—in the sense that the Lord's blessings are so great and so good that we can never in the present day and in present conditions have enough of them. We shall be satisfied thoroughly when we awake in his likeness (Psa. 17:15)—when the "change" of the First Resurrection shall have completed our transformation as New Creatures into our Lord's likeness—"from glory to glory." (2 Cor. 3:18.) Nevertheless, there is a measure of satisfaction to our drinking, even in the present time—just as with a thirsty one at a fountain, he drinks with relish, with appreciation, with satisfaction, only to take more and more. So with those who are the Lord's. He pours into their cup blessings rich and satisfying, and fills the cup repeatedly, even while they are in their present tabernacle. Let us appreciate more and more the Truth, the water of life, and let us see to it that we get it pure from the fountain, and that we recognize no other fountain than the Lord Jesus, however much we may appreciate the channels through which the supply may have come to us.—Z. '08:44.

◆

"This is the way: walk ye in it." One, at least, has trodden it before. Look for his foot-prints and follow him, and "He will give strength unto his people," even though they walk alone, as he did, without the cheering companionship of fellow travellers.—Z. '06:5.

"THEREFORE DOTH MY FATHER LOVE ME, BECAUSE I LAY DOWN MY LIFE THAT I MAY RECEIVE IT AGAIN."

The special love of the Father for the Son above all others is here referred to. The basis of that special love was the Son's complete trust in the Father and thorough harmony with and obedience to the divine will. We can see at a glance how such a noble, faithful character would be appreciated by the Father. Our Lord had always been obedient to the Father, but he learned the meaning of obedience, he learned to appreciate how much obedience might cost by the things which he suffered—his self-denial, humiliation, death. No wonder all noble hearts love this noble Shepherd, and what wonder that we who are his sheep, and who realize so great a blessing and advantage through his sacrifice for us, should love him in return.—Z. '05:91.

◆

Our Father is the Great King and he has promised that the Christ shall sit upon his throne, and we have been invited to become parts of the Christ, the Anointed, the Messiah. Shall we wonder that we need training for this important position; shall we be surprised if disciplines are imposed and requirements made of us more than are imposed upon those not intended for this high position! Surely the arrangements of our Father, the Great King, are wise and righteous altogether. Therefore, those who are in full sympathy and accord with him will be anxious to learn the lessons and to make the preparations necessary for the Kingdom honors. They may be disesteemed by their ambitious brethren and may be evil spoken of, from the Head down to the last member of the Body, but if they have the Divine favor, theirs shall be not only the anointing but also the acceptance to the throne. "Have patience, brethren, the hour of your deliverance draweth nigh": "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—Z. '08:358.

◆

If the New Creature remain loyal to God, the old creature will perish. The one or the other must die before the conflict is over. It is a fight to the finish. And this conflict is a test of the New Creature—not of the old creature. The New Creature has been called to glory, honor and immortality. In order to attain this state, it must prove unquestionably its loyalty to God. In proportion as the new mind controls, and we love righteousness and hate iniquity, in that same proportion shall we have strength in battling with the forces outside, with the conditions of the present time; and the greater success shall we have in battling with our own flesh. —Z. '14:116.

◆

Betake thyself to prayer, dear child;
A time like this demands
An oft communion with thy Lord,
A closer grasp of hands.

Spend seasons sweet and precious, child,
Confiding all thy ways;
Herein lies strength and succor full
To meet these evil days.—Z. '08:358.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER FORTY-THREE

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Pride of Heart Abominable

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord."—Prov. 16:5.

PRIDE MUST take its stand with the other reprehensible qualities of the fallen human mind, character. The Scriptures recognize two conditions of heart, the **right** and the **wrong.** The one that God approves is called Love; the other, the one that He disapproves, is Selfishness. All selfishness is opposed to God's Law. Anything selfish is contrary to the Divine purpose. The quality of **pride** is specially abominable to the Lord, because there is not a creature in the Universe that has anything to be proud of. Everything that anyone has is a gift: it is not of his own manufacture or creation. God gives the blessing. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." (James 1:17.) It is of His fulness that we have received. Everyone, therefore, who is proud, is certainly very reprehensible in God's sight, for he has been only a recipient of favor, blessing. All God's creatures are dependent upon Him.

Worldly pride challenges faith in God and obedience to Him. Only those of the Lord's people who are of good courage and full of confidence in the Lord can overcome this giant of pride. It is necessary that the victory should be made complete. Pride, in its every form, should be so thoroughly humiliated, killed, that it can never rise again to destroy us. This battle each one has to fight; and the only proper weapon with which to overcome is the **"Sword of the Spirit,"** showing us what is pleasing and acceptable in God's sight. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—Luke 18:14; Z. '11:397.

It was the promise of a coming blessing that worked so marvelously in the hearts of the patriarchs, fixed their minds upon the Lord and separated them from the ways of evil. And it is the same gracious promise which, in proportion to our faith in it, helps us of today as it helped the patriarchs of old." According to thy faith be it unto you," is still God's rule, and those who have much faith and loyalty of heart to the Lord are sure to be blessed of him, for "the Lord knoweth them that are his." Moreover, it is the high reward which God has promised to these his faithful ones that constitutes a large proportion of the incentive which strengthens us in our battle with the world, the flesh and the Adversary. It was so with the patriarchs and so it is with us of this Gospel Age.
—Z. '07:92, 93.

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When we shall have experienced our change and have become like our Redeemer, all of our powers will be perfect. Our Love, our conception of justice, and also our conception of how to deal with others, will then be perfect.—Z. '14:77.

◆

Whoever can exercise the proper faith in the Lord and in his word can rejoice; those who cannot exercise the faith cannot have the joy and rejoicing in this present time, but must wait for their portion by and by. The Lord is now seeking those who may firmly trust him, come what may; he is seeking those who will walk by faith, not by sight. Those who cannot walk by faith now will have the opportunity of walking by sight very shortly, when the Kingdom shall be established. They indeed shall have a goodly portion, but the portion which God has specially provided for the faithful is joint-heirship with his Son in the Kingdom. Let us, then, who have accepted the Lord and his Word, cast away everything of doubt and of fear, and live rejoicingly day by day while seeking to walk in the footsteps of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. **The joy of the Lord is our strength,** the joy which God gives, the joy which comes from realizing that the Lord is our fortress, and that no ill can betide us without his knowledge, and that he has promised that all things shall work together for good to them that love him—with all their heart, mind, soul and strength.—Z. '05:365.

EASTERN CONVENTIONS

On special request of the Eastern Ecclesias, the following conventions have been arranged by the Committee of Seven, at which Brothers Heard and Edwards will serve:—

Minneapolis, November 7th, 8th, 9th.
Richfield, Wis., November 14th, 15th, 16th.
Chicago, November 19th, 20th, 21st.
Kansas City, November 28th, 29th.
Dallas, Texas, December 3rd, 4th, 5th.

Brother Palmer will also serve at the Kansas City and Dallas Conventions. Also the following Ecclesias will be visited by the brethren en route:—

Yakima, Wash., November 1st.
Spokane, Wash., November 3rd.
Winona, Wis., November 11th.
Withee, Wis., November 22nd, 23rd.
Springfield, Ill., November 25th.
Seattle, Wash., December 12th.

CONVENTION

Seattle, Wash., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 29th, 30th and 31st, at the W.O.W. Hall, corner of Fourth Avenue and Marion Street. Two meals will be provided daily by the local Ecclesia. For further information please apply to Brother Alex Hogen, 6713 Seventeenth Avenue N.W., Seattle, Wash. Phone Ballard 2853. All Standfast Bible Students are cordially invited.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FORTY-THREE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

Heroes of Faith

Heb. 11:1-40.

Golden Text:—"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—V. 1.

IN preceding lessons we have been discussing faith and works as the subtle power for good or evil wielded by the tongue. In this lesson we more particularly examine faith to learn of its importance as a motive power to good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

The chapter under consideration is one of the masterpieces of holy writ. Indeed, the entire book of Hebrews occupies a very commanding position in the Bible. Some, indeed, have questioned its authorship, but to us there seems no room for doubt that it was written by St. Paul. It is marked throughout by his masterful logic, reverence and personal humility. It gives insight into the Divine Plan of the Ages, which fully comports with St. Paul's other epistles and which far transcends in this respect all the other writings of the Bible. It has been noted by some that its style is more lofty than that of some others of St. Paul's epistles; but this may be easily accounted for. Those other epistles, although full of sound reasoning and logic, are written in a simple and fatherly style for the general reader. This one was written particularly for the benefit of the other eleven apostles and other learned Hebrews who were slow to discern the change of dispensation. Naturally, therefore, it was St. Paul's masterpiece, because upon it he evidently expended the greater labor—demonstrating the typical character of the Jewish Dispensation and indicating the antitypes of the Gospel Dispensation, as well as some reaching well into the Millennium. The references in the thirteenth chapter to Timothy and the statement, "They of Italy salute you," imply that St. Paul wrote this epistle from Rome, where he was in prison.

It should not be thought strange, however, that the Lord used this great but humble man, St. Paul, as his mouthpiece in presenting many of the "deep things" of the Divine Plan. His early education and his association with the Gentiles combined with his deep spirituality—and fulness of consecration to the Lord well qualified him to be, as was foretold, the Lord's "chosen vessel." Let us remember, too, the order stated:—

(1) To bear my name to the Gentiles;
(2) And before Kings;
(3) And to Israel.

St. Paul's missionary efforts were first directed of the Lord to the Gentiles. It was later on that he stood before King Agrippa and other notables of Palestine—still later that he was sent a prisoner to Rome, and to some extent doubtless bore witness there before the Court. Later through this epistle to the Hebrews God's message through this Prince of the Apostles did much for "Israelites indeed" who were trammeled by the things of the Law Covenant and unable to disentangle themselves so as to rightly discern between the shadows in the types and the eternal verities antityped in the Christ, Head and Body, and his great work as the "antitypical Priest," "antitypical Prophet," "antitypical Judge" and "antitypical Mediator" of the New (Law) Covenant.

"The Foundation of Things Hoped For"

Strictly speaking hope is unsubstantial—not a reality. It furnishes no genuine foundation—it is merely a hope. It will not sustain weight. But faith is more than hope. Faith implies a promise. And when a promise is made by the Almighty God, who changes not and who is as omnipotent as he is unchangeable, then faith can firmly trust him, come what may. Hope finds a foundation—finds in faith a substance, because the faith rests upon a Divine promise. Whoever, therefore, has hope that is without such a Divine promise has a foundationless hope. Thus we see the heathen with hopes and fears full of uncertainty; yea, many Christians, hoping for certain things, have uncertainty, fear and doubt, because they have not faith. And they have not faith because they are hoping for something which God has not promised and to many of them the things which he has promised are not known, not understood, and, therefore, not a basis for faith, nor a foundation for hope. Realizing these things, how careful we should be that our hopes should not soar away to uncertain fantasy, but build solidly upon the faith foundation of Divine promise. Such as have this proper faith must of necessity be students of the Divine Word and the greater their studies the more their faith; and the greater their faith the more their studies of the promises.

The Apostle brings before our minds from the past a galaxy of faith heroes. He holds them up for our admiration, so that they shine and sparkle and excite our admiration and, we trust, stimulate us to similar faith-heroism. None of these enumerated by the Apostle was a heathen vagarist feeling after God and hoping against hope and soaring off in imagination. They were all positive, forceful characters, who knew in whom they believed and testified their faith by their obedience to God.

John Calvin Defines Faith

"Eternal life is promised to us, but after death. We are told of a blessed resurrection, but we meantime become the prey of decay; we are promised righteousness, and yet sin dwells in us; we hear ourselves called blessed, and meantime are overwhelmed in infinite miseries; we are promised affluence of all good things, but are all our days in hunger and thirst; God proclaims that he will be ever present to help us, but seems deaf to our cries. What would become of us if we leaned not to hope, and unless our mind, guided by the Word and the Spirit of God, emerged through the midst of the shades, above this present world?"

The Apostle briefly sums up the matter of the Christian's present lessons in faith, saying, "We walk by faith and not by sight." The more carefully we walk with God the more peaceful and the more joyful may be our Pilgrim journey towards the New Jerusalem. Outwardly the world, the flesh and the Adversary may harass us, but no grief, no tribulation can shake our inmost joy, if it be well founded upon the faith foundation of Divine assurances that we are children of God, in touch with the Infinite, beloved by our Redeemer, who assures us that "The Father himself loveth you," and the Apostle, that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose."

St. Paul's Illustrations of Faith

"By it (faith) the Elders obtained a good report." Not all the Elders or ancients received a testimony that they pleased God—the "report" here referred to. No, the number who received this witness of God is comparatively small, and, in every instance, they were commended, not for perfect works, but for their faith. Their "faith was counted unto them for righteousness." The Divine intention was that those whose reverence for their Creator and obedience to his Word of promise shaped and moulded a human life under present conditions of imperfection and world-enmity to God thus implied that they had hearts so full of trust and the proper spirit that God could count it righteousness, count it perfection; because when in the resurrection such should receive perfect bodies under perfect conditions they would surely do the Divine will thoroughly. Hence their faith in God and his promises, attested by imperfect works, justified them to that Divine fellowship which they will fully enjoy when the things hoped for shall be realized.

Thus in few words the Apostle summarizes what he afterwards proceeds to amplify respecting the Ancient Worthies. Then he begins a specification of faith. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God—in obedience to Divine direction. We believe this equally true, whether we understand the seven days of creation mentioned in Genesis to be twenty-four hour days or to be longer epochs—seven-thousand-year days. The fact that Divine energy is exercised through various channels and agencies and that worlds are not spoken into existence in a moment of time matters not. While God could speak worlds into existence, as our Lord by his word turned water into wine, as a matter of fact this is not his usual proceeding, even as the fruit of the vine is usually produced by sunshine and rain falling upon the earth in which the vine has been planted. It is, nevertheless, a matter of faith with us that what we see was miraculously formed, even though gradually.

The Genesis account of creation does not go back to the forming of our world out of the elements, but begins with the statement, "Now the earth **was**, but was without **form and void (empty)**." As the seven days or epochs were consumed in a gradual lifting of mountains and sinking of oceans and bringing forth of fish and reptiles, fowl and beast and herbage, so we may well suppose that the formation of the earth itself was a gradual accomplishment of a still more remote period in which the various strata of the earth's surface were formed—limestone, shale, coal, etc. A godly man wrote, "Ever all things are Divinely directed, and in the uniformity of nature we see the work of God; or (else) we see about us that which is impossible, unthinkable,—power, wisdom, a plan without mind; infinite intelligence in a godless, scopeless world."

Well did the Psalmist write, "For the heavens declare the glory of the Lord. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no place where their voice is not heard"—by those who have a hearing ear.

"He Being Dead Yet Speaketh"

Particularizing the heroes of faith the Apostle begins with the first martyr, Abel, who is mentioned four times in the New Testament and three of the times particularly styled "the righteous." It was in his death that he spoke—in the fact that he died because of his devotion to the Lord. And has it not been so with many of God's saints—that their lives spoke more earnestly to their neighbors, friends and children after their death than while they lived? We know of many instances which have exemplified this. So Abel, the first martyr for righteousness in the world's history, yet speaks of his devotion to God and to principle.

Figuratively his blood is said to cry out to God for vengeance. Divine Justice is supposed eventually to see to it that every crime, every injustice committed shall somehow and somewhere receive a just recompense of punishment, whether in the present or in the future life. The Apostle calls our attention to the fact that the blood of Christ, on the contrary, speaks the very reverse, and, instead of calling for justice, vengeance, upon those who crucified Jesus and have persecuted the members of his Body, will eventually call for mercy. Our Lord was the great sin-offering for mankind, and all whom he accepts as members are specifically styled sacrificers —on behalf of sinners—to seal for Israel the New Covenant, through which all the families of the earth may receive the blessing of Divine forgiveness.

Enoch Walked With God by Faith

The testimony respecting Enoch was that his was a life of faith; that he walked with God and not with the world; that he sought to walk righteously, in harmony with the Divine will. The testimony is that all that approach God must believe that he is (else they would not seek to approach him), and must believe that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him, else they would not deny themselves the things highly esteemed amongst men and seek at the cost of sacrifice to do the things pleasing to the heavenly Father. The record respecting Enoch is very meager, but we do know that he was a prophet and that through him the message came that Messiah would come eventually with ten thousand of his holy ones to execute righteousness, judgment, in the earth—to overthrow sin and set up Divine standards amongst men. "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all."—Jude 14, 15.

Enoch not only prophesied this but he believed it and it stamped his entire character and made him separate from the world and drew him nearer to the Lord. Similarly faith in the coming of our Redeemer and the establishment of his Kingdom and the reward of his faithfulness and the judgment or trial of the world during the Millennium, in which every man will receive a just recompense of reward, whether good or bad—this faith still has a sanctifying power. Let us cultivate daily, hourly, the setting of our affections on things above, the things which God hath in store for them that love him, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come."

"Heir of Righteousness"

Noah is the third of these faith heroes held up for our inspection. None of these was righteous in the absolute sense, for the Scriptures declare, "There is none righteous, no, not one." Of Noah it is written, "Now Noah was perfect in his generation" —he and his family were separate, free from the contamination of their time, from improper intercourse with the angels, which kept not their first estate.—Gen. 6:4.

Noah's faith in God was manifested in his building of the Ark in obedience to the Divine instruction that a great rain and flood of waters would come, which would destroy every living thing and wipe out the corrupted race. This was no slight test of faith either, for we are to remember that the Scriptures declare that up to that time there had been no rain on the earth. It was moistened by irrigation and by mists and fogs. "For the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. . . . But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."—Gen. 2:5, 6.

For a long period Noah's faith was tested even unto the entering of the Ark and the closing of the door before the rains descended and the floods came. Of him, it is well declared, therefore, "He became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." God is pleased to call Noah and all others who thoroughly, genuinely trust him, friends. He recognizes them as separate and distinct from the world in general. Their faith is their distinguishing quality. Nevertheless a manifestation of the faith and the testing of it by works of obedience is required. Blessed is the man who has much and strong faith in the Lord, which will stand trial, testing; for subsequently will be granted to him a corresponding blessing. Nay, more than this, the Lord has guaranteed us that he "will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able" and he informs us that he knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are but dust.

He Looked for the City of God

Next in the list of Ancient Worthies is Abraham, styled "The Father of the Faithful"—not because Noah and Enoch and Abel had not been faithful, but because with Abraham God started a faith family to whom were given many and great promises. That family became known as the nation of Israel, and latterly as Spiritual Israel. Again, Abraham was the father of the faithful, because while the heroes that preceded him exercised faith in God, it was more along abstract lines, whereas the Divine revelation to Abraham was the Gospel, the good tidings in definite form—that in and through his Seed all the families of the earth should receive a blessing. Thus the Apostle declares that God preached in advance the Gospel to Abraham, and thus all who believe that Gospel, of which redemption by Messiah is the essential, all such are called "the children of Abraham," and he is spoken of as their father, the one through whom this Gospel hope was caused to descend.

But in still another sense Abraham was the Father of the Faithful: in the sense that he typified the heavenly Father, as Isaac typified our Lord Jesus, and as Isaac's bride, Rebecca, typified the elect Gospel Church.

Abraham's call of God was the result of his having faith in God and because he lived at an appropriate time for the Divine purposes to begin to be expressed. First his faith was tested by the Divine command that he leave his native country to wander up and down through Palestine as a shepherd, dwelling in tents without any fixed habitation, without any attempt to take possession of the land and to establish himself in it by building fortresses, etc. The promise was that in after times God would bring his posterity to this land and give it to them for a possession.

The promise went further and declared that if obedient the Lord's blessing would continue and that the seed of Abraham would become great and influential and that through it all nations would receive a blessing—and by implication all would come under its control. It required great faith to believe all this under the circumstances. And the test continued, as, year by year, Abraham's wife grew older, until the time of motherhood was long past. Still we read that Abraham's faith "wavered not."

Still later, after Isaac the son of promise had been born and had grown to manhood, the Lord tested the faith of this wonderful man by telling him to offer his son as a sacrifice. We are not to assume that this instruction was given by any mere impression of the mind, nor would it have been proper for Abraham to have accepted and acted upon anything short of an absolute demonstration of the Divine will in such a matter. The father love, the hopes of years, and apparently the Divine Word and Oath were all about to be wrecked. Yet his faith "faltered not," for he accounted that God was able to raise his son from the dead and that surely God would fulfil his every promise to which he had bound himself, not only by his Word, but also by his Oath.

While we exclaim, Wonderful faith! let us remember that this was the very quality of Abraham which specially commended him to the Almighty as his particular friend. And let us remember that if we would have the particular friendship and blessing and fellowship of the Lord this is the channel through which it is to be sought—the channel of faith, of trust, of obedience. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." The more faith we have the more pleasing we shall be in the Lord's sight and the more we may be used of him as channels of blessing to others—however imperfect we may be in other respects.

And here it is worthy of note that Abraham was not perfect in every respect. On two occasions he was reproved by heathen kings and shown in some respects to have less lofty ideals, in one particular at least, than they would have given him credit for. Nevertheless, God did not reject Abraham because of those imperfections. Indeed, possibly those imperfections were partially the result of Abraham's endeavor to hold on to the Divine promises and to do everything in his power to bring them to fruition. He knew that the Divine promise was that his child, who should be the channel of God's blessings to the world, would be the son of Sarah; hence he felt that he must not jeopardize either her life or his own. This very desire to do nothing to interfere with the Divine promise may have had something to do with apparent weaknesses.—Gen. 20.

"The City With Foundations"

When the Apostle declares that Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," we must not think this to mean that in his journeying throughout Palestine, he expected some day to come upon a newly-built city of divine construction. Nor should we think with some others that Abraham was looking for the New Jerusalem to come down from heaven—a city built of literal precious stones with gates of literal pearls. No, Abraham knew nothing about that city, for nothing respecting it had yet been revealed.

A city, in olden times, stood for and represented a fortification, a government, a rule of authority. Abraham realized that the earth was full of sin and violence and out of harmony with God. He knew that Enoch, his ancestor, a man of God, had already prophetically declared that Messiah would come, the representative of Jehovah, and establish a Government, a Kingdom, a City of Righteousness. He longed for that righteous government and realized that its foundation of righteousness would be deeply laid, and that it would be an everlasting Kingdom. He knew that occasionally a monarch came to an earthly throne possessed of good intentions and partially able to exercise these, but that soon his throne, his kingdom, crumbled and passed to others.

Abraham, therefore, was not in sympathy with any in his day, nor since, in looking for an earthly kingdom, but he was looking beyond all these for the Kingdom of God's dear Son—the Millennial Kingdom. His eye of faith looked down and beheld Messiah and the exaltation of Israel and the blessing of all the families of the earth during the Millennial day. Our Lord Jesus attested this, saying, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day (the Millennial day of Christ's reign) and he saw it and was glad." The Jews misunderstood our Lord to mean that he had been with Abraham. Others misunderstood him to mean that Abraham saw by faith his work of sacrifice. It is true that our Lord did appear to Abraham. It is true that in a certain sense Abraham foresaw the sacrifice of Christ in the typical sacrifice of Isaac, but it is also true that "the Day of Christ" is the Millennial day for the world's blessing and that it was that which Abraham saw and which gladdened his eye of faith.

We also see the same; and, sharing the same faith, we share the same joy and gladness of hope and expectancy. We indeed discern still more clearly than Abraham of what that city or Kingdom consists—that our Lord will be the great King, the Head over the Church his Body (his Members, his Bride)and that this Bride, the Lamb's Wife, is pictured symbolically in the New Jerusalem, whose foundation stones in glory will be "the twelve apostles of the Lamb." (Rev. 21:2, 11-14.) We see more clearly than did Abraham (because guided by the holy Spirit through the Word) that the Ancient Worthies will be the earthly channels or agents through which this Heavenly City will send forth its blessings to Israel and to all the families of the earth. As it is written, "Ye shall **see** Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom." Christ and his elect spiritual Bride will not be **seen** by men except as we now see our Lord' with the eye of faith.

"She Judged the Promiser Faithful"

We are glad that Abraham's wife is specifically mentioned in this list of faith heroes. It helps us to thoroughly grasp the Apostle's thought that the distinction of sex does not operate to the disadvantage of either male or female in connection with the Divine promises. Perhaps it cannot be said that Sarah's faith did not falter, but if it wavered for a time it certainly was recovered. Although she was past the age of motherhood she believed God. "She judged him faithful who had promised." Thus she was counted in with the noble list of whom the Apostle says, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises (the things promised), but having seen them afar off (with the eye of faith) and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers in the earth."

Ah, yes, here is an important feature. It is not sufficient that we see glorious things of the Divine purpose, not sufficient that we believe them, not sufficient that we rejoice in them. We must be willing also to stand the test of being strangers and pilgrims in the present time. Those who cannot stand this test will not be accounted worthy of a share in those glorious things. Those Ancient Worthies, unsatisfied with any of the earthly prospects, sought the heavenly—not in the sense that we are seeking the heavenly, the spiritual things—in the sense of hoping for the completion of a change of nature from earthly to spiritual. They sought or desired the heavenly in the sense expressed in our Lord's prayer. They wished God's Kingdom to come, to be established in the earth—a heavenly rule of righteousness, a heavenly city or government. "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city"—he has planned such a heavenly Kingdom or dominion as they hoped for. That Kingdom, the Scriptures assure us, will eventually be the "desire of all nations."—Hag. 2:7.

Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses

We pass along the aisles of the hall of faith-fame and note the pictures to which the Apostle calls our attention—of Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses. Each one has distinction, characteristics and peculiar traits; but the quality of faith foundation in them all is that which makes them the people of God—those he is well pleased to acknowledge and to whom he has already promised blessings in the future because of their faith. If anything would inspire God's people to a cultivation of the grace of faith it surely would be a walk through this portrait gallery of the Faith Heroes of the past.

Isaac showed his faith in the Abrahamic promise in that he conveyed with full confidence the Abrahamic blessing to his son Jacob; and none the less did he manifest faith in that promise when he gave a blessing also to Esau, realizing that under that original promise all the families of the earth to be blessed must include the family of Esau also. Jacob, exercised by faith in the promise made to his grandfather Abraham, manifested it in the ordering of all of the affairs of his life. Especially was it manifested on his death-bed when, after giving special blessings to the sons of Joseph, he worshipped God, leaning upon the headpost of his bed (translated staff in the common version). He recognized that the blessings that were to come to his family were all under Divine supervision and all included in the original promise made to Abraham. He further signified his faith by giving directions respecting his burial, that it should not be in Egypt, but in Canaan, the Land of Promise, which was Israel's by faith only.

Joseph gave many manifestations of his faith in God. Not only as a boy, but also while in Eg- he clearly demonstrated his faith in the promise of God that Israel was to be the blessed people through whom the blessing of the Lord would eventually, in co-operation with Messiah, reach all the nations of the world. By faith he gave direction that when Israel would leave the land of Egypt for Canaan they should not forget to take with them his bones. This does not necessarily imply that he thought the bones and the dust that had once constituted his entity would be necessary to God in his resurrection, but it does signify that he would thus testify his faith in a resurrection of the dead—his faith that he would participate in the blessings that would come to Israel through the Messiah.

"The Reproach of Christ Greater Riches"

In various ways did Moses testify his faith in God, but in none of them, perhaps, in a more remarkable fashion than in renouncing the privileges of the throne of Egypt, to which he was by adoption the heir. He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of the Abrahamic promise than to dwell in luxury with the others. The people of Israel were the people of the Messiah, the people of Christ; hence in associating himself with them he was showing his esteem for the reproaches of the Anointed. Indeed, faith marks every step of the progress of Moses in Divine favor and service.

"He endured as seeing him who is invisible." How graphically this describes the matter and how true it is today as well as then that the endurance of trials and testings is only possible to those who have the eye of faith—to those who can see invisible things, things invisible to others: especially those who can see the invisible King of glory and his, as yet, invisible Kingdom! It was through faith also that he instituted with Israel the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, though we have no reason to suppose that to any considerable extent it was possible for him to comprehend the real meaning of the passover and the antitypical significance of the blood and its sprinkling. His faith again was demonstrated in the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. His obedience matched his faith in all these matters.

While we stand in awe at the presence of so great faith, nevertheless we are encouraged thereby, because we realize that perfect faith is possible to us, although perfect works are not. Let us, then, hold fast by faith to the Divine promises and continue to walk by faith and not by sight, until, by and by, our change shall come and we shall enter into the realities of which now we have only the promises.

"By Faith the Harlot Rahab"

It is incomprehensible to the world, and an astonishment to the saints, that in so many ways the Scriptures show that God is no respecter of persons—that he has not been choosing out exclusively the great or the wise or the good, but, on the contrary, has been choosing the sincere, the honest, the faithful, notwithstanding lowliness of birth, natural blemishes and imperfections. Truly does the Lord say, "My ways are not as your ways, nor my plans as your plans." And truly did our Redeemer say that publicans and harlots should go into the Kingdom in preference to faithless, self-righteous Pharisees. How glad we are that in God's providence the Apostle mentions Rahab and her faith, and how the Lord appreciated it and rewarded it! Surely there is a lesson here that should be well marked and inwardly digested by every one of us, not only for our own encouragement, but also for our guidance in respect to others. It is in full conformity with the Apostle's statement that God is choosing some of the "mean things of the world" in the present time to ultimately confound some of the greater and mightier and less faithful and obedient.

After giving us this wonderful galaxy the Apostle seems to realize that he has only well begun the list. He declares that time would fail him to mention other faithful characters which have had God's approval, such as Gideon, Barak, Sampson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith won victories, wrought righteousness, secured promises, etc. In every case the faith was tried, sometimes by cruel mockings and scourgings and sometimes by bonds and imprisonments. Some were stoned. Some were sawn asunder. Some were homeless wanderers, desolate of earthly comforts, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. . . .

"So Great a Cloud of Witnesses"

The moral of our lesson is summed up in the first verse of Hebrews 12th chapter, in which the Apostle says, "Wherefore, seeing that we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses (martyrs), let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

What a grand exhortation! Let us heed it! Let us give faith its proper place. Let us feed our faith upon the Word of God and upon all the Divine providences of our experiences in life as they daily come to us! Let us thus follow in the footsteps of our great High Priest, the Captain of our salvation, our Leader, our Forerunner, whose sacrifice is the foundation for our faith and whose power in glory is to be its consummation, when he shall receive us unto himself in the First Resurrection, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."—Z. '09:133-138.

Praying For One Another

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death. I do not say that he shall pray for it."—1 John 5:16.

HERE the Apostle wishes us to understand that if we see a Brother who is overtaken in a fault and getting into difficulty which may lead to coldness and estrangement from the Lord, we should pray for such a one; we should ask the Lord's blessing upon him; we should, as a member of the Body, do all in our power for his assistance. If in the human body one hand becomes wounded or bruised, the other goes to its relief to allay the suffering and restore the member. It would care for and express sympathy for the wounded hand. So we, as members of the Body of Christ, are privileged to pray for one another; **to pray for all those who we have reason to believe are fellow-members in the Body.**

This is different from praying for the world—asking God to accept those who are not in the proper condition. We are satisfied that God has accepted the one class and that in going away from him they are doing violence to the principles of righteousness, and to their covenant and, therefore, are correspondingly going against his will. We may very properly ask guidance for them and wisdom for ourselves that we may speak and act aright. The Divine intention in suggesting that we should pray for one in this attitude, might be that it would aid in developing our sympathy for the various members of the Body and thus help us to scrutinize ourselves that we might be more sympathetic towards one another and have the greater care for one another's interests.

Concerning that portion of the text which says, "He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death," in what sense or to what degree the Lord permits us to be advocates one for another is not clear; but our advocacy of each other would seemingly be offered more particularly to the Head of the Body than to the Father. But even if it be supposed that our advocacy of the case of a brother would be heard by the Father directly, it would still not seem to be due in any sense to worthiness on our part; but because of our standing in the Body of Christ. God has arranged a method by which he is pleased to exercise an interest in the various members of the Body in harmony with prayer for such members. We might then ask, what would be the result if there were no members present to pray for a disaffected brother? Would God allow him to go down into the Second Death because no one living in that neighborhood knew about his case? The answer is that the Lord himself is the Head of the Body and quite probably if there were no other members who would be in the attitude of intercession and sympathy, the great Head of the Body would find some means of advocating the interests of the disaffected member. It could not be that the Lord would allow any member of his Body to perish simply for lack of our attention or prayers. . . .

If we neglect our interest in and care over the fellow-members, it is our loss; the Head would not neglect his interest and care over them; but all such as might be going in the direction of the Second Death would be recoverable only up to the point where their hearts go wrong.

Now we come to the latter part of the verse, "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he should pray for it." We are to understand that this sin unto death is something that is very specific. It is a matter of willfulness and is a turning again to the beggarly elements of the world from which we were once recovered, from which we once escaped. And what are the beggarly elements of the world? Some might suppose that the beggarly elements of the world are murder, robbery, etc. We answer, Yes. Are we to expect, then, that a Christian would turn to robbery and murder? And would this be a sign of his having lost the Lord's Spirit—not merely that he is losing it, but that he **has** lost it, that he is dead? We answer, Yes. And how would it manifest itself? We answer, our Lord gives a more refined definition of murder. To be angry with a brother without just cause—to have hatred, envy, malice, strife: these are the works of the flesh and the devil. Whoever has these—that is to say, whoever is actuated by these, not merely in a moment of impulse and through some oversight in the care of his tongue, but whoever deliberately and repeatedly manifests these as his own spirit and thought, has certainly lost the Spirit of the Lord, if he ever had it, if he had not been merely glossed over with an outward veneer of meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness and love. His loss of these qualities and his taking on of the vicious qualities, backbiting, slander, anger, malice, strife, etc., would indicate that he had lost the Spirit of the Lord. It would signify that he is not dying, but that he is **dead**.—Jude 12.

Going back to the illustration of the dog (which we used in Old Corn Gems, 28:15), we see a difference between this condition of willfulness and the one in which the New Creature might be temporarily overtaken in a fault and his "dog," so to speak, break loose and bite some one. The "dog" would get a whipping, and apologies would be made to the person injured and things made good so far as possible. The one who approves of his dog's going out and biting his brethren or neighbors has evidently lost the Spirit of Christ which he once had.

Those For Whom We Should Not Pray

Now, should we pray for such? The Apostle says, "I do not say that you should agonize for these." No; it would evidently be worse than a waste of time for Christians to pray and agonize and labor for such. There are plenty of more hopeful cases. If you had some trees in your yard, and you should see one looking a little withered or sickly, you might dig around it, fertilize it, water it, etc., but if, upon examination, you found it dead down at the roots, you would say, no need to use more fertilizer for it. So with this matter of prayer and laboring with those who have lost the Spirit of Christ and have developed, instead, a vicious spirit of the Adversary; **it is worse than a waste of time to have anything more to do with them.**

We might ask: What would be the best evidence to one's self that he had not committed the "sin unto death"? We occasionally come across people who believe that they have committed the "sin unto death" and usually they are in a very distressed condition of mind. We cannot say to these positively that the mere fact that they are distressed in mind is a proof that they have not committed "the sin unto death" in view of the typical lesson of Esau, "that profane person who sold his birthright," and of whom we read that he sought it earnestly and with tears, but did not recover it. Similarly, in view of the case of Judas Iscariot: his penitence for having betrayed the Lord, and his return of the money and hanging himself as an evidence of his deep remorse. What, then, shall we say to such?

In our own experience with these it has generally been the case that those who thought they had committed "the sin unto death," had really done nothing of the kind, so far as our judgment goes. Our method, therefore, is to try to show them that what they did was not done willfully or intelligently against God and his will. We ask: "Did you mean to do thus and so?" After catechising them along the course that seemed to them to constitute "the sin unto death" one will usually succeed in showing them that nothing that they have done was willfully, intentionally, knowingly done, and that the fact that they regret it and that the attitude of their heart and their intentions now is still in accord with the Lord, shows that the Adversary is merely endeavoring to shake their faith and confidence and to turn them aside.

We consider that a good method of dealing further with such persons is to say, "Now, if you have lost the Lord's Spirit, you will be loveless towards those of his people with whom you come in contact, and if you still have his Spirit you will not be harsh and implacable, but desirous of serving them. You will be kind, gentle, long suffering and thus manifest that you still have the Spirit of Christ. If you have the Spirit of Christ, that is a sign that you are his. If you are without this special mark of the Lord's Spirit it is an evidence that you are not one of his."

In some cases that we have known, the conditions seemed to imply that the persons had really lost the Lord's Spirit, for they confessed to special hardness of heart, no love, no sympathy, only bitter feeling. We could say but very little more to such, but merely advise them to try to take a different view of the matter and to progress to a better condition. We have suggested that perhaps they were physically impaired, or in some melancholy condition of mind, of which the Lord would not take note as being their real spirit or intention, and there we were obliged to leave it.

We have been asked if we understand Esau to be a type of the Second Death class or of the Great Company. It is probable that Esau was not a type of those that go into the Second Death. He is spoken of as profane—that is, not spiritual, and the Apostle seems to use him as representing the natural man. In his outward appearance of hairiness, etc., the animal man, apparently, was pictured. The Lord through the Apostle may merely have been designing to show that though the natural Jew was offered these wonderful privileges of the spiritual things he would prefer the natural things. We know that the

Apostle likens the whole Jewish nation to Esau "who sold his birthright," and yet the same Apostle proceeds to tell us that this whole Jewish nation will by and by be recovered and come into special blessings under the New Covenant. We may presume that these were not worthy of the spiritual blessings, and that this is the reason they were looked upon as of the Esau class and not of the class who get the spiritual blessings. They preferred the earthly, so we believe there will be earthly blessings for them in due time. If, when the earthly blessings of the Millennium are offered to this Esau class, they will not profit by the lessons and disciplinings and come to a right spirit, they will be destroyed; but if they do respond to the Lord's providences and the chastenings of the Lord in the Millennial Kingdom, they will gradually rise and lose their bestiality; their stony heart will be taken away, and instead they will receive a "heart of flesh."

So in our judgment Esau represented merely the natural man, the natural Jew, and did not represent either the "Great Company" or those who will go unto the "Second Death" during this Gospel Age.—Z. '10:185-187.

The Children of the Consecrated

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me."—Prov. 8:17.

WE encourage the dear brethren of the Truth everywhere to see to it that their children have the very best religious instruction, as well as their own example in daily living. Every home should have its Sunday-School class, even though there be but one child. Every Sunday should have its quiet, sacred hour of fellowship, communion and praise, participated in by the parents and the children. It is beautiful to note the influence of a proper home-life in the families of some—in joy and love and truth. Will not all so resolve and by the grace of God fulfil?

There is a charm about childhood—its innocency, its faith—and the child-mind is peculiarly susceptible to the Truth and its spirit, too, the spirit of consecration. How blessed it would be if all of our children from earliest infancy were taught to love the Lord as the Giver of all good; to consider his will, to consecrate their little all to him! Such children so instructed often become teachers of their parents, showing forth the true spirit of devotion. Here and there on our Pilgrim visits we are introduced to little ones thus early given to the Lord and trained in harmony with his will. Some of these have the spirit of devotion so strongly developed that any pennies coming to them, instead of being spent for sweets, are laid by as consecrated to the Lord. We seek not the pennies of the dear children, but their welfare, the great spiritual blessing which comes into their lives and which will surely go with them through coming days to their comfort and joy. The little, loving hearts thus early given to God, surely find a blessing and a protection from much of the evil that is in the world.

Many of the little ones who thus began a life of consecration and self-denial for the Truth's sake before they could rightly appreciate the situation in full have since matured most remarkably, and at twelve and thirteen years have requested opportunity for symbolizing their consecration, and have given clear evidence of a comprehensive knowledge of the fundamentals of the Gospel and of a heart-appreciation of the sacrifice presented to the Lord.

Our Lord said, "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me." And similarly our prayers need not go up on behalf of the world, for whose blessing the Millennial Kingdom and its opportunities have been provided, but our petitions may ascend on behalf of those who have become consecrated to him, our brethren in Christ, and this will include the younger ones of the consecrated as well as the aged. We may also in a general way include those whom the Father has given to us as our wards, as being under our care and instruction; we may pray for these favorable providences of God for their highest welfare, and for ourselves wisdom and grace, that we may present to them the Lord's message in its best form and exemplify the same in our daily conduct and in our dealing with our children.—Z. '08:326.

A Father's Letter to His Son

To My Dearly Beloved Son:—

It has been on my heart for a considerable time to write you a letter, to be opened on your —— birthday, ———, 19—, to endeavor to express something of the feeling of love and tenderness I have towards you, and to point out, for your eternal joy, and for your safety, certain principles, which I hope you will receive into a good and honest heart. At last a favorable opportunity has come, and as my last message to you I beg you to give earnest heed to all that this letter contains.

At the present time your dear mother and myself are in good health, and the affairs of the world are moving along in about the same general way as they have always moved within my lifetime. The world in general expects it to continue in this way indefinitely, and yet, looking at matters through the Lord's Word, I know that when this letter is read your papa and mamma will have passed from earthly scenes forever, and the great time of trouble, "such as never was since there was a nation," will no longer be a matter of prophecy, but of history.

It is needless for me to tell you, my dearly beloved son, what great tenderness and sympathy I feel for you in the thought that you will be bereft of earthly parents at such an early age, or with what compassion I think of the great suffering soon to come upon the world, and which, to some extent, you must share. But I know our heavenly Father and his goodness too well to think he has ever made a mistake, and am sure that beyond these special and peculiar trials lie special and peculiar blessings. It is of these blessings that I particularly wish to write.

The reason that your dear mother and myself must die within the next few years is because the sufferings of the "Body of Christ" are not yet complete, and we have taken advantage of the great opportunity to make covenants to lay down our earthly lives, and are trying to carry out our covenants, before this great work, which was begun by Jesus himself at the time of his baptism, is forever finished. The time when the suffering shall be finished is now very near, hence it follows that, if we have proved sufficiently faithful to the Lord, the time is near at hand when we shall share with him the glory that is to follow. This means that very soon it will be true of us, as it is true of the Lord, that we shall be changed from earthly to heavenly conditions, and the world will see us no more, forever.

The knowledge that the setting up of the Lord's Kingdom is at hand was brought to us by a study of the works of our dear Brother Russell. As soon as you are old enough to understand his writings, I trust you will study them with the greatest care. . . .

What I now wish to urge upon you, my son, is that you give your whole heart and life unreservedly to the Lord, or in other words that you make a whole-hearted consecration to him who bought you with his own precious blood, and that you grow up with the single ambition to do with all your might all you can to aid in carrying on the work which will then be under way at Jerusalem. I wish you to do this for your own joy of heart, because there is no joy comparable to doing the Lord's will, but not alone for this reason. The Scriptures show that every son and daughter of our race must at some time make an unconditional surrender to the Lord, a full consecration of heart and life to do his will, or else be destroyed.

In addition to this I wish to hold out to you a hope which I feel justified in mentioning. There are some Scriptures which show that, after the close of the Millennial Age, the Ancient Worthies may possibly be given heavenly honors and stations, and there is some reason to believe that, as the child of consecrated parents, you may possibly be counted in with the Ancient Worthies if you make at once a full consecration of your heart to the Lord. If I understand the matter rightly, you occupy a different relation to our heavenly Father than other children, up until the time when you reach years of accountability, and I am hoping that you will take advantage of this special relationship to place yourself as close to the Lord and his work as it is possible for you to do.

One thing more. Beware, oh beware, of ever resisting the Lord's will even in the smallest way! At the close of the Millennial Age there will be many who shall be destroyed, because at heart they are not fully submissive to the heavenly Father's will.

Should it be the Father's will that you be permitted to be counted in with the Ancient Worthies, be assured, dear son, that a loving father and mother will greet you in the heavenly courts with joy untold, but in any event, you may be sure we shall always watch your course with fondest affection, doing all we can to aid you in carrying out your good resolutions, and hoping in the end to see you attain to perfect everlasting life, under the happy conditions to be obtained in the golden ages to come, after the last enemy has been destroyed.

With tenderest love,

Your devoted father.

—Z. '08: 263, 264.

The Seven Walks

THE Christian's walk means his course of conduct, including thoughts and words and acts. The Apostle indicates very clearly what this work or course of the Christian should be, outlining it in seven different ways.

(1) The New Creature should walk not according to the course of this world, not according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience. (Eph. 2:3.) This is the walk of the world, the walk of evil-doers, the walk of the children of wrath; it is the very opposite of the walk of the children of the light.

(2) The New Creation should walk in good works—"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. 2:10.

(3) The New Creation should "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called." (Eph. 4:1.) Their vocation is the very highest of all; they are the representatives of the Lord and Master; they bear his name, and should seek in everything to glorify it and never to dishonor it. What we do, what we say, what we think—in fact, even general appearance and deportment, and where we are seen,

all reflect more or less upon the great King, whose ambassadors we are. Our vocation is that of servants of God, and no earthly avocation should be permitted in any degree to hinder or abridge the influence or the service which we have undertaken as children of God, as joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, prospective members of his Bride class, his Kingdom class.

(4) The New Creation are to "walk not as other Gentiles walk." (Eph. 4:17.) We are not merely to refrain from the sins and gross immoralities of the natural man, but we are to allow this principle or spirit to pervade all of life's interests. We are to refrain from following foolish, worldly fashions, from being influenced by a worldly spirit; we are to have the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of a sound mind to direct us in our joys, in our sorrows, in our wedding celebrations, in our funeral services—in fact, whatsoever we do we are to do to the glory of God and are not to be influenced by the spirit of the world, but contrariwise are to set a proper example for the world in all matters—in gentleness, kindness, patience, faithfulness to the Lord and to duty. The walk of the world is on the broad road; the walk of the Church is on the narrow path. As we progress in Christian experience, we find this path getting farther and farther away from the broad road which the world is traveling, and whoever tries to keep pace with the world will in many respects be apt to find himself leaving the narrow path or otherwise disadvantaging himself as a New Creature.

(5) The New Creation is to "walk in love." (Eph. 5:2.) Their words, their deeds, everything with which they are connected, is to be governed by this law of the New Creation—love. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." In compliance with this law of love and our Lord's glorious example, the Apostle says we ought to so love one another as to be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren. We should be ready to lay down a few months, a few years; we should be ready at any time we can find an opportunity of service for a brother, especially along the lines of his spiritual or higher interests as a New Creature. This spirit of love is to control our conduct with all; we are to love our neighbors and seek to do them good, to serve their interests. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor," would not take advantage of his neighbor to cheat him, to injure him in any manner. Love would not prompt its possessor to speak evil of his neighbor, but would lead to a remembrance of the Scriptural injunction, "Speak evil of no man." Love would do this from principle, because it is right; but more than this, Love ultimately takes such an interest that the brother exercising it does not wish to do anything that would be harmful to another's interests, to his welfare, but rather to do something to his honor and blessing. Love, progressing as we walk in it, ultimately brings us to that blessed condition where we can love our enemies and be glad of the privilege of doing good to those who despitefully use us and persecute us.

(6) The New Creation are also instructed to walk as children of light; their course in life is always to be with respect to the things that are just, pure, loving, noble, kind, the things that are in harmony with the divine character and Word, the things that prove to be of greatest blessing to neighbors and to friends. As children of the light, every day will see progress; their light will be shining more and more clearly and accomplishing the greatest good; they will not be ashamed of it, but will set it on a candlestick, where it may give light to all in the house, to every member of the household of faith. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 5:16.

(7) The New Creation should "walk circumspectly." (Eph. 5:15.) This word circumspectly signifies to look carefully all around at every step. The Christian cannot be a careless liver, and as he looks around him and realizes the various pitfalls and snares, not only will he seek to make straight paths for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but additionally he will seek divine aid and counsel and guidance that he make no mistakes, that every step in life's pathway will be such as will have divine approval and glorify God in his body and spirit which are God's. This circumspection of our walk as New Creatures is the more necessary because our Adversary, the devil, is specially on the alert to ensnare us; and our tests are permitted to be the severer as we come nearer the goal of character. We should walk circumspectly also because we profess to be of the New Creation, begotten of the holy Spirit and not of the world, but separate from it; and because our lights so shining more or less reprove the world. Therefore the world, instead of sympathizing with us, hate us, and watch either to see what fault can be found with our walk, or to stumble and trip us, sometimes from malicious impulse and sometimes from sympathetic reasons; as the Apostle Peter, when speaking to our Lord, said, Far be it from thee, Lord, to thus sacrifice thyself and die. To walk circumspectly is to take note of these various hindrances and stumbling stones and pitfalls; to hearken to the instructions of the Lord's Word and to the leadings of the holy Spirit; and thus to walk carefully; and in so doing to develop the characters which are most pleasing to our Lord and Head. The Apostle says this circumspection is necessary in order to our walking "not as unwise but as wise." There is a wisdom of the world which is foolishness with God, and there is a wisdom with God which is foolishness to the world. The wisdom of God is to be ours, and we are to exemplify it in all the affairs of life. Hence the faithful, the New Creatures in Christ, should be the most exemplary, the most wonderful people in the whole world, the wisest in the management of their affairs, the wisest in the government of their children, the wisest in their eating, drinking and dressing. Not that the world will always approve, but that the end will justify the course which the Lord's Word directs, and which the wise of the New Creation, walking circumspectly, will take.

—Z. '08:184, 185.

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Our consciousness of sin increases with our education in the school of Christ—increases in proportion as we cease to do evil and learn to do well.

—Z. '06:61.

"Transformed"

Through a cloud of earthly senses
  Bursts upon my raptured sight
Such a vision of my Father
  In his glory and his might,
In his justice and his wisdom,
  In his tender, watchful care,
Manifested in my Savior,
  Rich in blessings everywhere.

Oh, it thrills with love and longing
  Every fiber of my soul,
To be with thee, in thy presence,
  While the countless ages roll.
Then a voice, "This be thy pattern,
  See that thou in all thy ways
Make according to the pattern,
  To my glory and my praise."

Thou the pattern, blessed Savior,
  How can I a copy be
Of that gracious, sweet perfection
  Manifested, Lord, in thee?
"Keep thine eyes upon the pattern,
  Look not thou aside, behind,
And beholding but my glory,
  Thou shalt be transformed in mind."

Oh, my Father, in thy mercy
  As I gaze with unveiled face,
Let me see, as in a mirror,
  All thy brightness, all thy grace.
So in looking, so in longing,
  Shall my homely features glow
With the radiance of thy glory,
  And thy matchless beauty show:

All my days be crowned with gladness,
  From the center of my heart,
Praise to thee that in the blessing
  Thou wilt let me have a part.
So then, in a faithful service,
  For the loving service' sake,
Changed from glory unto glory,
  I shall in thy likeness wake.

I shall see thee in thy beauty,
  I shall in thy beauty shine.
All the loving, all the longing,
  Merged in purest love divine.
Satisfied with the full sweetness
  Of the bliss of heaven above,
All my future spent in blessing,
  All my being lost in love.—Z. '07: 71.

Blameless and Harmless, Without Rebuke

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life."—Phil. 2:15, 16.

TO BE BLAMELESS is to be devoid of any disposition to do evil; not controlled by anger, malice, hatred, strife; but, on the contrary, to be disposed to do all the good possible to all with whom we have contact. We should be harmless, not merely so far as God would see, or so far as the brethren would see, but, so far as possible, harmless in the sight of the world, before whom we are to shine.

Blamelessness does not necessarily mean perfection. One might be blameless and yet imperfect on account of natural weaknesses. To be blameless in the sight of God is to live so that he may see one's intentions always to be just, loving, kind. The world will speak evil of us even as they spoke evil of our Lord, and will hate us; for the darkness always hates the light. If we have the friendship of the world, we are not in accord with God. The Apostle James asks, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." (James 4:4.) But if we are friends of God, the world will seek to do us injury as evil-doers—"as deceivers, and yet true." While not "friends of the world," we must endeavor to be at peace with them, so far as lies in us.

We cannot, however, expect to please everybody. We are to be blameless in the sight of those of mankind who are recognized as having the best judgment amongst the people. Thus it was with our Lord. While the world blamed him, yet in their private councils they recognized the fact that he was harmless. Pilate, who put him to death, was honest enough to state, "What evil hath he done? I find no cause of death in this man"; "I am innocent of the blood of this **just person.**"—Luke 23:22; Matt. 27:24.

In the text under consideration the thought of the Apostle is that whatever charges may be made against us, our course of conduct before the world should be such that only the perverse of mind will think wrongly of us; that the better minds would think justly and note that the lives of the Lord's people are indeed blameless, not blameworthy.

The disciples were dwelling in the midst of a perverse generation, their own Jewish nation, among whom they were so to conduct themselves that their lives would be a light to their fellowmen. **Perverseness** implies unwillingness to be guided by the Lord; **crookedness** seems to apply to their course of life, not always a way of open wickedness, but a crookedness, doing both right and wrong. On the one hand was an evil heart of unbelief; on the other were forms and ceremonies.

For more than eighteen hundred years these conditions have followed the Lord's people. Everywhere there is a great deal of crookedness and self-will. Many things are done which are known to be contrary to the will of the Lord. Amidst these conditions the Lord's people are to shine as lights; they are to seek to walk in the Lord's ways, that they may "show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light."—Z. '11:108.

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Love: supreme love to God and then to the neighbor as to self, is that disposition of heart that will make us victorious in every trial and temptation. In its operations toward God it lays hold by faith upon his mighty power; it trusts his wisdom and his guidance; it takes his standpoint of observation and patiently waits the outworking of his deep designs, rejoicing in hope; and is persevering and faithful through all the painful processes that lead on to victory. In its operations toward our fellowmen it is pure, peaceable, kind, forebearing, gentle, sympathetic, tender, and in strict conformity to the golden rule.—Z. '00: 246.

◆

We may safely conclude that those of the Lord's people who have seen with any kind of vision the glories of the Lord or have had a glimpse through the eyes of their understanding or otherwise of the glorious character and person of our Lord and God, have had the opportunity of realizing more than ever their own littleness and insufficiency. As it was the three most advanced ones of the Lord's followers who were granted that vision of the Kingdom, so since then it is the most advanced of the Lord's followers, the most humble, the most zealous, the most faithful, who are granted the clearest visions, the clearest perceptions of the glories of the Kingdom, and these are permitted to reveal to others of the elect little flock more and more of the grandeurs of the divine arrangement as each may be able to hear and to appreciate and to understand the same.
—Z. '06:183.

◆

We are not to dictate to the Lord, not to attempt to be wise or good or obedient in ways that he has not directed. This is a hard lesson for some dispositions to learn,—continually they want to do more than is written in the Scriptures. Such a course indicates either a lack of reverence for the Lord and his Word and the Wisdom thereof, or else a too great self-confidence, too much self-esteem. A humble and trustful heart should learn to say, Thy will, O Lord, thy way and in thy time—"Thy will, not mine be done."—Z. '05:119.

◆

No right-minded person will conclude that because God is very merciful and of tender compassion, therefore he may be sinned against repeatedly and forgiveness be relied upon. Rather let us get the thought that even though we should be forgiven and even though God should be merciful to us to the very last extreme, nevertheless every transgression and disobedience shall receive a just recompense of reward in some way or other. He who sins suffers, even though he subsequently repent and be forgiven.—Z. '05: 221.

◆

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." He shall bring to pass blessings and peace, even in the midst of the storms of life, and he shall bring to pass eventually for these glory, honor and immortality through Christ.

May we not adapt Longfellow's majestic words:

Thou, too, sail on, O Ship the Great!
Sail on, O Church, be strong and wait!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What workman wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat,
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!

Fear not each sudden sound and shock;
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale.
In spite of rock and tempest roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee—are all with thee!
—Z. '09: 328.

◆

It was after we had endured something for the Lord's sake and for the Truth's sake, and rejoicing in our opened eyes, that the Lord found us in a particular sense and revealed himself to us in a still higher and more favorable blessing, and thus we became his disciples in the highest sense—his followers. Let us continue to follow him; let us continue to take whatever experiences come to us in the path of duty, and realize that it is a privilege to be on the side of the right and the Truth.
—Z. '05: 76, 77.

◆

We do well to keep continually in mind the thought that God, with whom we have to do, is a spirit being of unlimited power; that he can read the very thoughts and intents of our hearts and that any worship or service that we could render, that he could accept, must be honest-hearted—rendered in spirit and in truth. He seeketh only such to worship him, and of this class there are but a few at the present time.—Z. '09:173.

◆

Is it not well that we inquire each of his own heart whether or not we have a warm, deep, earnest love for the Lord, or if it is only a general love and admiration? We are to seek to cultivate that personal fellowship with the Master which will enable us to answer these questions affirmatively, and to assure him that we love him more than lands or houses, boats or nets, parents or children, husband or wife or self. As our heavenly Bridegroom he is worthy of our Love, and if we do not feel this love toward him we are not of the kind fit for the kingdom, not fit to be members of the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. And how shall we know, how shall we test our own hearts as to the degree of our love for the Lord? How will the Lord test us if not by permitting trials and difficulties, oppositions, etc., to overtake us? As our Lord hid himself from the apostles for three weeks or more, yet was near them watching over them and ready to take advantage of the most favorable moment to impart the necessary lessons, so we may be sure that he watches over our interests to give us needed instruction and guidance—and if sometimes he hides his face behind a frowning providence it is with a view to our blessing or strengthening to prepare us to appropriate some valuable lessons which will be helpful to us in our preparation for a place in the throne. Let us, then, rejoice even in tribulation, knowing what it is working out, and in such tribulation let us ask ourselves the question, How am I showing my Lord that I love him supremely?—Z. '08:173.

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It comforts us to remember that Satan and every evil is subject to the Almighty's power.—Z. '05:41.

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As for fasting, the Lord's people today will find plenty of things from which they may well fast. Fasting simply signifies self-denial, and self-denials of food are not the greatest nor the most estimable in God's sight, we may be sure. There are other desires of the flesh which all who are the Lord's true followers are to strive to control and diminish and starve out, that they might proportionately flourish and be nourished spiritually and made strong.—Z. '06:266.

◆

In 2 Tim. 4:2 the Apostle, as a minister of the grace of God, explains that the declaration of the Gospel may include three features: (1) reproof; (2) rebuke; (3) exhortation. But it is safe to caution all of the Lord's people against too liberal use of the first two features. In order to reprove properly, the heart should be very full of love and sympathy; else the reproofs and rebukes might be sharp and possibly do more harm than good. Even with the heart full of love, it requires a head that is exceedingly well balanced to be able to make use of reproofs and rebukes to good advantage to those who really need them. And herein God's people are to be "wise as serpents, harmless as doves." Exhortation is the form of service which quite evidently can best be used by the majority of the Lord's people. And even this form, as well as the other efforts, should be characterized by patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness.—Z. '12:67.

◆

Some one has remarked that, as the sharpening of scythes in harvest time does not mean lost time or energy, so also time spent in prayer is not lost as respects the affairs of life. Unquestionably the best men and women in the world are those who pray, and pray regularly, who bow the knee, as did Daniel. Unquestionably the moments thus taken from earthly affairs are well spent and bring more than the commensurate blessings upon the worshipper and all with which he has to do. Unquestionably it is impossible to live a consecrated life in neglect of prayer. What would Daniel have been without his praying time! How would his faith in God have persisted in that heathen land? How would his loyalty to principle have maintained itself in the midst of corruption had it not been for his communion with his Maker? To the Christian this privilege is still further enhanced by a realization that "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous," in whose all-prevailing Name we may approach with courage the throne of heavenly grace, and obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.—Heb. 4:16; Z. '11:348.

◆

SEALED IN HEART AND FOREHEAD

The Scriptures refer to the sealing of the holy Spirit as necessarily essential to membership in the Lord's family at all. Whoever does not receive the seal, the impress of the Holy Spirit, will not be a copy of God's dear Son in heart, in character, and cannot be associated with him in the Kingdom. The sealing process is a gradual one, the impression becoming more permanent daily. We are not to understand sealing in the forehead to be identical with this sealing in the heart, although the two are closely related. Many of the Lord's dear people throughout the past have had the seal of the Lord upon their hearts and characters but not upon their foreheads—they did not have that intellectual knowledge of God and his glorious plan which he has provided for all of his faithful of the present time, and which now becomes a test, a proof, an evidence to us that we are in the Lord's favor and that he is showing us his deep things.—Z. '07:147.

◆

Let us be helpers and not hinderers to fellow-pilgrims.—Z. '10:109.

◆

The parable of a man with a beam in his own eye trying to pick a mote out of his brother's eye was a forceful method whereby the Master inculcated the necessity of humility on the part of those who would be taught of God. Humility is here as elsewhere put as a foundation virtue. The Latin word for humility is **humus**, ground. This implies, that it is the soil out of which other virtues are produced. Those who think they know everything can learn nothing. As Chalmers has said: "The more a man does examine, the more does he discover the infirmities of his own character." As Wheatley remarked, "Ten thousand of the greatest faults in our neighbors are of less consequence to us than one of the smallest in ourselves." A knowledge of our sins and imperfections should make and keep all humanity humble; but how beautiful it is to realize that the perfect Jesus was humble and that all the holy angels are so!—Z. '12:165.

◇

"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING. IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS."

Having surrendered their wills and all of the interests of the present life to the Lord, exchanging earthly interests for heavenly interests, the Lord's people are less disposed than others to pray unceasingly for **earthly good things.** Having set their affections on things above, their prayers are in respect of those things,—the heavenly robe, the heavenly food, the heavenly favor. Their prayers are specially for such leadings of divine providence and such assistance of divine grace as will enable them to rejoice always in such experiences as their gracious Lord may deem best. More and more they find their prayers to consist of thanksgiving for blessings already received, as well as for those yet to come, which they grasp by the hand of faith.

Their prayers are without ceasing, in that, having the condition of heart which is in fellowship with the Lord and fully devoted to the doing of his will, they not only implore his blessing at the beginning of each day, and present their thanks at the close of each day, but in all of life's affairs they seek to remember that they have consecrated their all to the Lord, and by faith look up to him in all of the affairs of life;—and in proportion to the importance of their undertakings they, by faith, realize the association of God's providence with all the interests of life and give thanks accordingly. This is the will of God concerning us;—he wills that we live in such attitude of constant regard for his will and for his blessing.—Z. '03:25.

◇

Some may spend their lives in serving the Lord's Truth, and may be said to be **sacrificed** as truly as though they had died at the stake.—Z. '12:264.

◇

As the testing begins with the Church and proceeds to the world, so apparently in the Church the testing comes first upon those in prominent positions. And these need to be the more watchful, the more prayerful, the more earnest, that they may be able to **stand.**

The Adversary's attempts are various. Some he beguiles with flattery, pride and ambition; others he would vanquish with despondency mingled with humility; others he attracts with the pleasures of the present life; others with ease and popularity; others with misdirected energy, which gradually leads them away from the narrow way. Some are seduced through too great a reverence of human teachings, human authority, subserviency to creeds and theories; while temptation comes to others along the line of disloyalty to God and to the leadings of his providence. Let us each remember that love for God means loyalty to him and to his Word, **and to every leading of his providence and grace,** and loyalty to the brethren. A little while and our trials will be ended. A little while and we shall see His face, if we are faithful.—Z. '09:360.

THE LIFE, NOT THE WORDS, A TRUE INDEX

The Truth should be the standard. Everything else is certainly quite contrary to the Divine will; and that person who fails to uphold the Truth in his daily life gives evidence that he has not the Spirit of the Lord in the proper degree. If, therefore, any of us should find that in our daily lives we have not been living in conformity with the message of our lips, it would be a matter of serious concern, for we cannot doubt that whoever is out of harmony with the Lord in his heart, will sooner or later get out of harmony in his utterances.

We think, therefore, that if in a congregation of the Lord's people any one were proposed as an Elder or a Deacon who outwardly had ever so great ability as a teacher, but who did not in his daily life give good evidence of being fully consecrated to the Lord, and of seeking to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, he should be regarded as a very dangerous person to put into the high position of Elder or Deacon. The sooner he is left quite by himself the better. For the more such people are put forward, the worse it will be for them and for the congregation whom they are supposed to serve.
—Z. '12:50.

◇

It would appear that by nature many of us have a consciousness of our own imperfections and a realization of our unworthiness of Divine favor, and fears are likely to grasp us and torture us. This is because we do not know our heavenly Father. The more we learn of him the more does the love of God cast out fear from our hearts, and assure us that he who created us is sympathetic towards all who are striving for righteousness. He is a **great** God, not a little one.—Z. '10:232, 233.

◇

The noblest and best of the people of God are those who have strong, iron wills, which they have fully submitted to the guidance and direction of the Lord—through the Bible, the holy Spirit, and Divine Providence. "The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in Truth."
—Z. '09:347.

◇

Those who will be of the Kingdom of God must be like little children in the sense of being simple hearted, true, honest and trustful of their heavenly Father—of such-like will be the inheritors of the Kingdom.—Z. '10:249.

◇

Nowhere in the Scriptures is the statement made that Christ came to **sacrifice himself.** What the Scriptures say is that He came **to do the Father's will.** He did not refuse to drink the "cup" which the Father prepared for Him, but drank it to the dregs. And for His obedience to this Will, even unto death—no matter how long or how short a time the Father should be pleased to have that life continue—He received the reward. He gave over all into the Father's hands. **This** was a **Sacrifice;** for He had a right to use His life. But His obedience to His Father's will led to the sacrifice for which He obtained the reward.—Z. '12:265.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER FORTY-FOUR

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"Just For Today"

"Just for today!" O depths of faith,
I need to help me say,
"Thy Will be done"—"Thou leadest me,"
Just step by step today.
I do not know tomorrow's ills
Or joys—which may befall;
But whatsoever may betide,
Thy grace will cover all.

"Just for today!" O blessed thought
That cheers my fainting heart!
I cannot wander far from thee
If I but do my part,
Which is to trust and never fear
What man may do or say,
But only "look to thee in prayer"
And trust, "Just for today!"

"Just for today!" How many saints,
Now gone to their reward,
Have trod this narrow path of faith
By "Leaning on the Lord,"
Not knowing what each day might bring
Of joys or trials severe;
Not even caring, for by faith
They knew the Lord was near!

"Just for today!" Yea, all his flock,
His "Body," these "Last days"
Rejoice to follow in his steps,
And lift their hearts in praise.
For well we know "a little while"
Is all we have to stay,
How glad we are he helps us pray,
"Dear Lord, just for today!"

"Just for today!" This "Day of Trial,"
When Satan seeks to sift;
When God permits "such polishings"
We praise him for "the Gift"
Of One who's mighty to direct
The work, till he shall say
"Enough! the Jewel shines! 'Tis mine!
I'll gather it today!"

"Just for today!" Then, brethren dear,
Be neither weak nor faint,
But "watch and pray" to be kept free
From sin's dread power and taint
That ye with Christ may "live and reign"
Till sin and death shall cease,
And Earth shall have her Jubilee
Of Everlasting Peace!—Z. '08:342.

HAPPINESS describes the joyful moods which come to mankind from time to time, but blessedness relates to that permanent joy and comfort which are the result of the attunement of character to harmony with the divine. The people of the world may at times be happy, and at other times downcast, mournful and troubled; but to those who become followers of the Lord Jesus, and who as pupils in the school of Christ are taught of him, there is a peace of God which passes all understanding ruling in their hearts, bringing comfort and rest even under most adverse outward conditions.
—Z. '06:70.

◇

This mystery, hidden from past ages and dispensations, is now made known to the saints and none others; and if the saintliness be lost, the understanding of the mystery undoubtedly goes with it.
—Z. '09:54.

◇

We must take our choice as between human wisdom and divine wisdom. Blessed are they who walk by faith and not by sight, and accept the wisdom of the divine Word. The end of the Lord's plan will fully justify their confidence, and work out abundantly more and better things than they ever dreamed.—Z. '05:108.

◇

In seeking to be helpful to brethren in the Church it is well that all should cultivate a largeness of heart; and yet it is well also to remember that in the cases of many of the Lord's children adversity has evidently been of the Lord's intention, to bring to them blessings which they would not be prepared to receive in any other manner. We are to endeavor to be helpful to each other, while seeking not to conflict with the operations of divine providence, and the learning of important lessons by those whose welfare we seek. We should never forget the Apostle's inspired words.—2 Thess. 3:10. Z. '02:9.

EASTERN CONVENTIONS

On special request of the Eastern Ecclesias, the following conventions have been arranged by the Committee of Seven, at which Brothers Heard and Edwards will serve:—

Minneapolis, November 7th, 8th, 9th.
Richfield, Wis., November 14th, 15th, 16th.
Chicago, November 19th, 20th, 21st.
Kansas City, November 28th, 29th.
Dallas, Texas, December 3rd, 4th, 5th.

Brother Palmer will also serve at the Kansas City and Dallas Conventions. Also the following Ecclesias will be visited by the brethren en route:—

Yakima, Wash., November 1st.
Spokane, Wash., November 3rd.
Winona, Wis., November 11th.
Withee, Wis., November 22nd, 23rd.
Springfield, Ill., November 25th.
Seattle, Wash., December 12th.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FORTY-FOUR

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

Our Beloved Pastor and Brother

CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL

Passed from this life four years ago.

The Faithful and Wise Servant of the Lord. —Matt. 24:45.

The Man with the Writer's Inkhorn.—Ezek. 9:3, 4.

The Diligent Watchman.—Isa. 21:12, 13. Hab. 2:1, 2.

The Steward of the Penny.—Matt. 20:8.

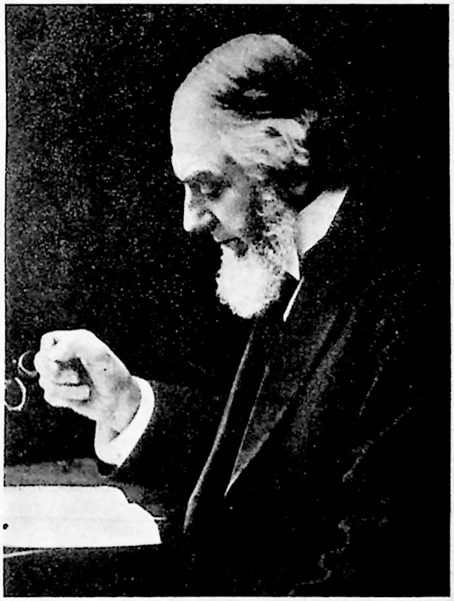
The Wise Man that Delivered the Little City.—Eccl. 9:15.

The Special Messenger to the Last Age of the Church (1874-1918).—Rev. 3:14.

Born in Allegheny, Pa., Feb. 16th, 1852. Glorified on Oct. 31st, 1916, while about his Father's business. —1 Cor. 15:52.

Faithful unto death.—Rev. 2:10.

Let us Follow him as he Followed Christ.—1 Cor. 11:1.



OUR PASTOR'S FINAL EXHORTATION

Being the Concluding Words of His Will and Testament

I entreat you all that you continue to progress and to grow in grace, in knowledge, and above all in love, the great fruit of the Spirit in its various diversified forms. I exhort to meekness, not only with the world, but with one another; to patience with one another and with all men, to gentleness with all, to brotherly kindness, to godliness, to purity. I remind you that all these things are necessary for us, necessary that we may attain the promised Kingdom, and that the Apostle has assured us that if we do these things we shall never fail, but that "so an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

My hope for myself, as for all the dear Israel of God, is that soon we shall meet to part no more, in the First Resurrection, in the Master's presence, where there is fulness of joy for evermore. We shall be satisfied when we awake in His likeness—

"Changed from glory unto glory."

(Signed.) CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL.

—Z. '16:359.

MAY THE LORD CONTINUE TO BLESS THE MEMORY OF BROTHER RUSSELL

Assuredly God Was With Him

Exodus 3:1-14.

Golden Text:—"And he said, Certainly I will be with thee." —V. 12.

UNDOUBTEDLY God's providences had to do with the general character of Moses, even before his birth, as well as with his educational training for the great work he was intended to perform. Nevertheless we see it would be quite contrary to all divine usages for the Almighty to have coerced his free moral agency. The natural trend of character being developed, it was necessary for Moses himself to decide respecting its use. The central feature of this lesson is that, with all the preparation and all the fitness of the man Moses for the great work of delivering Israel from Egypt, the secret of his success lay in the fact that God was with him—God was the Deliverer of Israel; Moses was merely his servant and representative in connection with the work, as the Lord himself declared —"I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Long Years in Preparation

When we consider the eighty years of Moses' life, in which he was in preparation for the great work of the Lord, it helps us to appreciate better the fact that our God is never in haste—"Known unto the Lord are all his works from the foundation of the world." He has no need for haste; he knows the end from the beginning, and every feature of the divine plan is properly timed. Thus 4000 years and more passed before Jesus was born, and yet the Scriptures assure us that it was in due time that God sent forth his Son, born of a woman. (Gal. 4:4.) **This thought should give us great confidence in the certainty of the development of the Lord's plans at the proper time.** He is not a man that he should err in judgment; he is working all things according to the counsel of his own will. In this thought all his true people may rest in confidence; whether matters seem to culminate rapidly or slowly, each feature will be in its "due time." Although so much time was consumed in preparation for the deliverance of Israel, yet when the appropriate hour was come, in that one morning the whole nation started to move. Let us all learn the lesson more and more to wait on the Lord, and then to be ready to move promptly when he indicates that his appointed time has arrived.

Eighty Years of Schooling

The life of Moses is divided into three parts of equal length. The first forty years brought him to ripe manhood and made him familiar with all the learning of the Egyptians. The second forty years began when he fled after killing the Egyptian and had found that his brethren were not prepared for deliverance nor willing to accept his assistance as their friend and brother, and ended when he returned to Israel, under the divine direction, and successfully led them forth from Egypt. The third forty-year period of his life, beginning with the exodus, terminated with his death at the end of the forty years in the wilderness, just as the people of Israel were about to cross over into Canaan. The period of Moses' life from forty to eighty years of age was spent as a shepherd in the service of his father-in-law Jethro, otherwise called Ruel. We may be sure that in that long period of time this meek man, who was ready to do with his might whatever his hands found to do, had large opportunities for learning lessons of patience.

Doubtless like David, the shepherd, Moses learned to think of the sheep and his care over them, and to consider God the great Shepherd of his flock, and probably often wondered why, after giving the gracious promise to Abraham, God had left his flock, the children of Abraham, in apparently hopeless bondage. Doubtless, too, he thought of his own endeavor to help the people, and how they had shown such a spirit of discord as made it impossible for him to aid them as he would. Doubtless he had thought many times of how it would have advantaged his own earthly interests had he followed the course marked out for him by his foster-mother, Pharaoh's daughter, and remained a member of the royal family of Egypt and a sharer in the honor and dignity of those who oppressed his people. Doubtless he thought of how he had apparently blighted his entire life and spoiled all of his earthly prospects by his desire to do good to his brethren—his desire to serve their best interests. Doubtless he thought of their ingratitude and failure to appreciate him, their resentment of his kindly-meant assistance, saying, "Who made thee a ruler or judge over us?"

Probably in the mind of Moses the matter resolved itself in the thought that he had done his duty, the best he knew how to do, although the entire matter had resulted in failure; and it is probable he was more or less despondent respecting the future, as a meek, humble-minded man would be apt to feel. Meantime under the Lord's providence he went hither and thither with his flocks and herds to the very land in which later on he was to lead the people of Israel. In those forty years he must have become very familiar with the vicinity of Sinai and lower Palestine. Little did he know the value of the teachings he was then learning. The lesson in all this for us is faithfulness to God and to duty as he gives us to see it, leaving all the results with him. Another lesson is that present experiences, trials and difficulties may be fitting and preparing us for a future useful service for the Lord and his people, even though at the time we see no relationship or connection between the two.

The Burning Bush

Here our lesson opens, showing Moses at eighty years of age shepherding his flock on the rearward side of Mount Horeb, called Mount Sinai, where subsequently the law was given. As Moses looked, behold a bush burned near him, supposedly a thorn-bush, which sometimes grows to quite a height and quite a thickness in that country, and is known as shittim wood—the kind of wood used in the construction of the Tabernacle. As Moses looked at the flame he perceived that the bush was not consumed, and considering this a most remarkable phenomenon he turned aside and drew near to it to observe the matter. It was then that the Lord spoke to him from the midst of the burning bush, and Moses at once knew that what he had witnessed was a miracle by which the Lord would attract his attention with a view to communicating some important lesson.

God usually has a symbolical meaning in every miracle, and in this one the representation is supposed to be Israel in the midst of tribulation, yet not consumed. Later on, in Reformation times, the Church of Scotland appropriated this burning bush as its emblem on its banner, because its experience had been similar in that it had passed through severe afflictions and distresses and trials, yet had not been consumed. And is not the burning bush a good illustration of the experience of Christ and all of his members? Are they not indeed surrounded by fiery trials? and do they not emerge from these unscathed, uninjured?—on the contrary, blessed, developed, strengthened, made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light?

Well do the Scriptures declare that the fear, reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We greatly deplore the growth of irreverence in our day, and urge upon all of our readers for themselves and for their families the cultivation of this proper attitude of mind, so helpful to our preparation for the life that now is and that which is to come. Liberty and independence, while excellent qualities, are always to be valued and conserved and protected, are never to become license, never to lead in any degree to irreverence. This is the more necessary to us for two reasons: (1) Because of the growing irreverence of the world about us, born of a declining faith in God and everything supernatural; (2) because of our growing enlightenment in the Truth, by which we see that the fears of an eternity of torture were groundless, there is a danger of losing that proper reverence for God which belongs to and is an integral part of love.

The Prophet David writes, "Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God"—take heed to your standing, take heed to your walk, take heed to your conduct. Whether the house of God be a great temple, as in past times, under divine direction, or whether it be the temple of God, which is the Church of Christ in the flesh, we should realize that reverence is befitting to us in connection with everything that is holy and consecrated. We should realize that whoever neglects the cultivation of reverence in respect to these matters is making his own pathway slippery and dangerous. He who reverences little and is careless is much more likely to stumble, to fall, and be utterly cast down. If even Moses, the "meekest man in all the earth," needed from the Lord as his first instruction a lesson of humility, shall we not suppose that such a lesson is necessary to us? Yea, verily!

Let us honor the Lord in our hearts, in our outward demeanor. Whether we bow to give thanks for our daily bread, whether we bow our knee night and morning in acknowledgement of divine care and providences, or whether we meet with those of like precious faith, let us see to it that reverence marks our conduct and our words as well as rules in our hearts. Let us, too, take off our shoes, let us lay aside the ordinary conduct of life by which we are in contact with the world, and in all our ways acknowledge him, especially when we hearken to his voice in the study of his Word as his people.

"Seen Their Affliction"—"Heard Their Cry"—"Know Their Sorrows"

With these words the Lord informed Moses briefly that he had not been negligent of the interests of Israel. By these words he allows him to understand that not until this time had the appropriate moment come for interference on behalf of Israel. And this thought of the divine knowledge, sympathy and care, and waiting for a due time, would give Moses all the more confidence in the Lord's ability to do according to his own good purposes when his time had come. And so it is with us: If we look back over the 1800 years and more of this Gospel dispensation, and perceive how the Lord's cause has been permitted to be overwhelmed by the forces of evil during the "dark ages" and even yet, we stand amazed, and might be inclined to say, "Does God not know? does God not care? that he allows his own name to be dishonored and his Truth to be trampled under foot and his faithful people to suffer?"

The Lord assures us, too, that he knows all about these matters and is very sympathetic, far more so than we, and he is both able and willing to grant the deliverance needed at the appropriate time. What confidence it gives us now when we look back and behold that Spiritual Israel has been preserved through all these centuries! that notwithstanding the fiery affliction and adversity that burned against them, they have not been consumed! How it comforts and cheers us now to hear the Lord's voice telling us of the deliverance that is just at hand, and sending by us his messages of love and power to all those who hear. O, yes! we occupy holy ground, we hear the holy voice, our eyes are opened to see the wonderful things. The Lord be praised! Let us give heed to his Word.—Z. '07:140-142.

◆

Some fear that we are lifting up too high a standard which will deter some from accepting other truths now due. But we ask, can we have too high a Scriptural standard in view of the strenuous times the Scriptures forewarn us to expect? May we not unconsciously have lifted up the very standard foretold by the prophet Isaiah (59:19, 20), "When the enemy shall come in like a flood the spirit of the Lord shall raise up a standard against him, and the Redeemer shall come to Zion."—Z. '08:253.

◆

On the common principles of reasoning we ought to have full confidence in every item of God's Word, and should continually act upon it.—Z. '92:374.

"The Servant of the Lord Died"

Deut. 34:1-12.

Golden Text:—"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."—Psalm 116:15.

MOSES had faithfully fulfilled the work of the Lord committed to his care down to and including his orations, in which he urged upon Israel faithfulness to God similar to that which he had illustrated in himself. The Lord's time had come for a change in Israel's leadership, and Moses was instructed to go up into the mountain called Nebo, whose culminating peak is Pisgah—about nine miles east of the northern end of the Dead Sea. There God gave him a vision, a view of the glorious land where the people he had loved—and in whose interests he had sacrificed the honors and dignities and luxuries of the Egyptian Court—were to have their home as the people of the Lord, under the terms of the Covenant which he had mediated at Mount Sinai. In the clear atmosphere of that country any eye may see much of the land of promise, but under divine blessing and assistance, as in Moses' case, we can readily realize that the vision, the view, could be a very comprehensive one. It was a part of this great leader's reward, which doubtless greatly comforted his heart, enabling him to see that his labor for the Lord had not been in vain, but was destined finally to bring forth great fruitage.

The mental vision of Moses probably took in more than was visible to his natural sight. He understood that the Lord's blessing upon the nation, including that upon himself, was all a part of the great Abrahamic promise. He understood that the coming of Israel into this land which God had given to them was merely one step in the development of the divine plan. He understood that Israel was to become very great in the world, and ultimately be used as the Lord's instrumentality in guiding and instructing all the other nations. He understood that ere this would be accomplished a greater teacher than himself would come, a greater lawyer, a greater leader, a commander of the people—the Messiah. He could see in the promise made to Abraham—"In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed"—the ultimate results, but he could not see, we may be sure, the intermediate steps of divine providence as they are now open and plain before the eyes of those who are guided by the Lord's Word and Spirit to an understanding of the "deep things of God," which other eyes have not seen nor ears heard.

"The Hidden Mystery"

The Apostle tells us that the riches of God's grace revealed during this Gospel Age were mysteries hidden from past ages and dispensations. (Col. 1:26.) Due time for their revealment had not come. Nor were they ever intended to be understood except by the Elect—To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom, but to outsiders these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings.—Mark 4:11.

The mystery of the divine plan, which Moses saw not, but which we now see through the apostolic explanation provided by the holy Spirit, is that the natural seed of Abraham, though it will have a part in the blessing of all the families of the earth, will not have the chief part except as it is represented by Jesus and the apostles and members of the early Church, who according to the flesh were of the natural seed of Abraham, but according to the spirit were the spiritual Seed—the true heirs. Neither did Moses nor others of his time see that to this spiritual Seed, which originally was of the Jews, would be added members gathered out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue during this Gospel Age. Nor was it necessary that Moses should see or understand or appreciate more than he did. Greater knowledge would have been confusing to him instead of favorable. Thus, "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." And again, as the poet declares:

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

As we in mental picture see the great Moses looking over the land of Canaan and feasting upon the gracious promises of God to Israel—as we note his faithfulness in his long and arduous service and his peaceful resignation of his life into the hands of the Lord at its close in full confidence of the fulfilment of the Oath-Bound Covenant, it points a lesson for us. We similarly are standing at the close of a great epoch. The antitypical Moses, Christ the Head and the Church his Body, has arisen amongst men, and for eighteen centuries has been leading onward in the direction of the Millennial Kingdom. **The journey is almost concluded.**

By the Lord's direction the living representatives of the Body of Christ, the antitypical Moses, are already on Mount Pisgah, and, looking beyond, are getting the antitypical vision of the glories of the age to come—of all the blessings that shall come to the world of mankind during the Millennial reign of Christ. With the eye of faith we perceive the blessing of all the families of the earth through the faithful ones of Spiritual Israel and the Ancient Worthies. We see gathering to their leadership and instruction, not only Israel, but all the families of the earth. We perceive the blessing of the light of the glory of the Lord as it shall fill the whole earth and make it no longer necessary for each to tell his neighbor and his brother, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know him. We perceive the fall of Babylon, the antitypical Jericho, and the rescue at the time of the Great Company of the Lord's true people who there were represented by Rahab. With the eye of faith we perceive the victory after victory which the people will gain over their various foes under the Spiritual Joshua, the Christ of glory. We perceive that ultimately, with still continued victories, even the last enemy shall be destroyed, and the whole groaning creation brought to the glorious place where there shall be no more sighing, no more dying, nor more crying, because all the former things of sin and condemnation shall have passed away. This is our present vision from Mount Pisgah, and surely it is glorious and heart-inspiring. Soon in our changed condition beyond the vail we shall be members of the great Joshua, leading all the families of the earth to the victories and blessings promised through faith and obedience.

The prophecy of Baalim might properly be considered as the sentiment of Moses, as, looking down into the future he endeavored to discern the shadowy outlines of the coming blessings of God's Covenant, namely:

"I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not nigh:
There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob,
And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel."

"So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died . . . according to the word of the Lord: This is the land which he sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed. I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither." As we look into the beauties of the Millennial epoch, the Lord tells us that we shall not go over to possess it, but that it shall be for mankind. But he tells us more, namely, that he has "provided some better thing for us." (Heb. 11:40.) He tells us that we must die, that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 15:50.) The glorious vision shown us is merely for our comfort and strengthening in connection with the closing scenes of this age.

In the Hebrew language the expression, "according to the word of the Lord," would literally be, "by the mouth of the Lord," and Jewish rabbis have given this a poetic turn and say, "by the kiss of the Lord." It is a beautiful thought, for while Moses was about to pass to the extreme limit of the curse —death—he was recognized of the Lord and dealt with as a faithful servant; and in view of the fact that the divine plan had arranged for his redemption from sheol, the grave (Hosea 13:14), his death is appropriately described as a sleep. And thus we have the picture of a father kissing his child to sleep, and the other picture of the glorious morning of the resurrection in which the antitypical Moses, as the Father's representative, will awaken him to the blessings and eternal rewards which are his in the divine plan because of his faithfulness.

"The Death of His Saints"

This is the signification of the Golden Text, "Precious in the sight of Jehovah is the death of his holy ones." In a prominent sense our Lord was the Holy One of God, and his death was in the sight of the Father very precious, and his soul was not left in sheol, in hades, in the state of death. He was "raised again from the dead on the third day." And through him not only the faith and obedience of the Church are counted for righteousness, but likewise the faith and obedience of Moses and the Ancient Worthies. It is on this account that these may be called saints, holy ones, because in the divine plan the merit of the Redeemer is imputed to them, and through him all these are now in divine favor. Consequently, precious in Jehovah's sight was the death of all such; and of all now walking by faith and seeking to do his will.

From this standpoint we may understand that the death of our dear Redeemer, like that of all of God's consecrated ones who have died, and much more so, was precious in the Father's sight, and that even though he died as the sinner, crying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," nevertheless he died with the Father's kiss. So may it be with all those consecrated to walk in the footsteps of their Redeemer. Covered with his robe of righteousness they are all precious to the Father, and their death under whatever circumstances will really not be accidental, but a kiss of divine approval and seal of the coming blessing in the First resurrection.

The Hidden Sepulchre

The Lord himself buried Moses, hiding the place of his sepulchre. The primary reason for this probably was to hinder the Israelites from carrying his corpse as a mummy, which in after time might have become a temptation to idolatry. The passage in Jude 9, which mentions Michael contending with Satan concerning the body of Moses, is a hint along this line, that Satan desired to have the corpse to use it for the further misleading of the people, but that the Lord through Michael the archangel hindered, prevented this, and kept the burial-place a secret from the Israelites.

But there is another view of this matter which is interesting because it relates to Spiritual Israel. Jesus and the Church unitedly constitute the antitypical, or greater Moses—the Spiritual. Their inheritance is not to be earthly but heavenly, and a grave is a symbol of hope as respects an earthly resurrection. Hence it was appropriate that the type should not show an earthly grave since the antitype has no hope in that connection. Our hopes are not fleshly, not restitutional hopes, but hopes as New Creatures of glory, honor and immortality in joint-heirship with our glorious Head.

The Meekest and the Greatest

The Scriptures write down Moses as the meekest man, and history has written him down as one of the greatest of men. Our Lord and the apostles and others of the Church are not introduced in this comparison because their greatness is not as men but as New Creatures. They sacrificed earthly occupations, etc., that they might preach the Gospel of the Kingdom and suffer therefor.

When one hundred and twenty years old Moses' eye was not dim, his vigor had not fled! This is a remarkable statement in whatever light we view it. Forty years was he schooled in all the learning of the Egyptians, a member of the Court and a general. Forty years more he was hidden from view in the desert region as a herder of sheep, learning, we may be sure, lessons of patience, endurance, self-control and humility. And now, finally, the last forty years of his life he was used mightily of God, and yet maintained humility and exemplified the wonderful qualities of a judge and lawgiver, and later a general, a prophet, a priest, a teacher. The poet has said of him:—

"This was the truest warrior
  That ever buckled sword:
This the most gifted poet
  That ever breathed a word.
And never earth's philosopher
  Traced with his golden pen
On the deathless page, truths half so sage
  As he wrote down for men.

"And had he not high honor?
  The hillside for his pall,
To lie in state, while angels wait
  With stars for tapers tall;
And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
  Over his bier to wave,
And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
  To lay him in the grave."

Our lesson says of him that there has risen no prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, because not only was his birth and development specially under divine blessing and guidance, but he fully submitted himself to the Lord in meekness, in humility, and was therefore specially used of him as a type or picture of the still greater prophet—the Christ of glory. (Acts 3:22,.23.) Let us use the words of others in describing this great servant of God:—

Moses, the Statesman: "Inspiration apart, Moses possessed all those endowments and qualities which form the consummate statesman and chief magistrate; an intellect of the highest order; perfect mastery of all the civil wisdom of the age; a penetrating, comprehensive and sagacious judgment; great promptness and energy in action; a commanding and persuasive eloquence; a hearty love of truth; an incorruptible virtue; an entire freedom from selfish ambition; an invincible hatred of tyranny and injustice; a patient endurance of toil; a courageous contempt of danger, and a greatness of soul in which he has never been surpassed by the most admired heroes of ancient or modern times. Comprehensiveness, grasp, force, sagacity, were the predominant characteristics of his mind; magnanimity, disinterestedness, an enthusiastic devotion to liberty and an ardent but rational piety, were the leading qualities of his heart."

As a General: "Moses delivered his people from the most powerful nation on earth; maintained them amid the perils of the desert for forty years, and led them in confidence against a country settled by fierce tribes, which they conquered."

As a Lawgiver: "However much may have been added by the development of the people, like the amendments to the Constitution and laws of the United States, yet through Moses was instituted the great system of civil and religious law."

As a poet: "The two songs in Deut. 32 and 33 and Psalm 90."

As an Orator: "The great orations in Deuteronomy stand among the few greatest masterpieces of eloquence in the world's history, if not at their head."

"Whom the Lord Knew Face to Face"

To others of the prophets the Lord usually manifested himself through visions or dreams or by angels in human form, but seemingly Moses was granted a still closer approach to the divine presence. When thinking of the expression, "face to face," we should understand it to signify that Moses enjoyed a closeness of fellowship and favor with the Lord rather than that he really looked into the face of Jehovah, concerning which it is written, "No man can see my face and live" (Ex. 33:20); and again, "Whom no man hath seen or can see." (1 Tim. 6:16.) It may be that our Lord Jesus as Michael especially represented the Father with Moses, as it was he who prevented the Adversary from having Moses' body after death. But in any event, applying the matter antitypically to the Christ, we see that in a special sense the antitypical Moses in the flesh throughout this Gospel Age has had a favor in connection with the divine presence not enjoyed by any others of previous times.

We see the Lord's face with the eye of faith, for we have seen our Lord Jesus, who represents the Father, and who declares that whosoever hath seen him hath seen the Father—has enjoyed the best possible revelation of the Father whom no man hath seen. Again he declares respecting the Church, his Body, "Their angels [messengers] do always have access to the face of my Father," as though he would tell us that all of our interests and affairs are brought directly to the Father's attention, so that there is no danger of any delay and any peradventure that all things will work together for good to them who love him. Again we see the Father's face in the sense that we see his love, which is displayed to us through a knowledge of the Truth by the holy Spirit granted to us. Not merely divine power do we see, not merely divine wisdom do we see, not merely divine justice do we see—but God himself is love, and he has shown us his love. We who with the eyes of our understanding have seen our Redeemer and come to a knowledge of him have seen the Father and become acquainted with him proportionately, for all things are of the Father and all things are by the Son. "Let me die the death of the righteous—let my last end be like his."—Numbers 23:10.

Our Lord Jesus was the Righteous One, and when we think of death we are to think of him and his death, and to remember that as he laid down his life we also ought to lay down our lives on behalf of the brethren. As he sacrificed earthly interests and advantages and privileges and pleasures that he might die the sacrificial death in accord with the divine plan, so let us remember that we have covenanted similarly to be "dead with him." For if we be dead with him we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Our hope of participation with him in his resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, is based upon our faithfulness in participating with him in his death, which means also a share with him in the sufferings of this present time. But standing as we do with the Pisgah prospect before us, strengthened by might in the inner-man, why should either death or its attendant sufferings deter us? Nay, in all these things we will rejoice and triumph through our Lord and Redeemer, our Head!

"Men of Like Passions With Yourselves"

These were the words of the Apostle Paul, and his humble statement respecting himself and his companions is true also of Moses and all the Ancient Worthies, and is in full harmony with the Scriptural declaration, "There is none righteous [perfect], no not one." We here quote the words of another respecting the blemishes of Moses' career:—

"Two or three items to his fault are attributed to Moses, as every saint has failed in some point at some time. There is no garden but has some weeds. But the most unjust thing we can do is to measure its value by its weeds and not by its fruits. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Moses' few faults are such as will never be noticed at all by a worldly man. They are like a broken limb on a tree loaded with magnificent fruit. All God's works through men are done by imperfect instruments."

"There's a fleck of rust on a faultless blade—
On the armor of price there is one.
There's a mole on the cheek of the lovely maid:
There are spots upon the sun."—Z. '07: 266-269.

The Royal Law—The Golden Rule

Matt. 7:1-14.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

IN THIS lesson we have a leaf from our Lord's great Sermon on the Mount. This is not a sermon to sinners but to the Lord's consecrated people; our Lord addressed himself specially to his twelve chosen disciples, who were being particularly and fully instructed, that they, under the spirit dispensation soon to be inaugurated, might become the twelve foundations of the heavenly Kingdom, represented symbolically in the New Jerusalem of Revelation.—Rev. 21:14.

True, many of the features of this Royal Law were then and still are sound advice for all who can receive them; but the fact remains that comparatively few are blessed with the opening of eyes and unstopping of ears to permit their appreciation of these holy pearls of truth; and assuredly they were addressed to and intended for only those who could receive them. Thank God for the good hope that ere long, the Kingdom being established, all the blind eyes shall be opened, all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and that in God's "due time" these precepts of the Golden Rule of Love will be appreciated by all and be applicable to all—whether they respond to them or reject them.

Following our Lord's example and injunction, we are endeavoring to set meat in due season, "things new and old," before the household of faith, the children of the Kingdom, and not before "dogs" —those who are still outside of divine favor, who have not yet received the grace of God and been adopted into his family and constituted sons. These precious truths are pearls of great price—of great value—to those who have the hearing ear and the understanding and appreciative heart—those who have been begotten of the spirit and are "new creatures in Christ Jesus," and seeking to live the new life. We do not attempt to present these matters to the brutish, the swinish, knowing that they would not appreciate them; but would merely feel a disappointment and resent our good intentions to our injury. Our Lord points this out later on in the discourse (verse 6), and his words are in full accord with those of Solomon, "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee."—Prov. 9:7, 8.

It is to the household of faith, then, that the Lord says, "Judge not that ye be not judged." It is useless that we give this advice to others than the pupils in the school of Christ, for not having put themselves under the instruction of the great Teacher it gives evidence that his instructions are not appreciated by them. But all true disciples (learners, pupils) should give earnest heed to this injunction, and should understand that it contains a very important lesson, which unlearned will render them unready for the great examination, unready for graduation, unready for the Kingdom; because in their examination this will be one of the tests. If they have been fault-finding, cynical, hypercritical, etc., judging others harshly and uncharitably, it will be a clear token that they have not developed the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love,—which is full of kindness and consideration: hence such would be judged or condemned as unfit for the Kingdom, for according to our way of judging others we will be judged—since nothing else will better demonstrate our true spiritual condition,—the presence or absence of love.

Whatever measure of mercy and generosity we mete out to others will be the measure of divine mercy that will be extended to us. If all the Lord's people could have well impressed upon their hearts this lesson from the great Teacher's lips, how wonderfully it would affect their attitude toward others, in thought as well as in deed; how generous, how forgiving, how sympathetic for the weaknesses of others they would become; how the spirit of love would grow in their hearts and manifest itself in their words and deeds!

Rafters in Their Eyes

Emphasizing this lesson, our Lord suggests that those who are always finding fault with the "brethren" who, like themselves, are seeking to walk in the narrow way—who can never see the noble efforts of the "brethren" to copy the Master, but are continually picking at them, are the very ones who have the greatest of faults in themselves, —lovelessness. The exaggeration of our Lord's words of reproof to this class seems to imply a vein of sarcasm, for literally he says, Why do you stare so at your fellow who is troubled with a grain of sawdust in his eye, while you have a whole rafter in your own eye? All the "brethren" are more or less troubled with difficulties of one kind or another, weaknesses of the flesh,—because all have the treasure of the new nature in imperfect earthen vessels—marred by original sin. "There is none righteous, no, not one" absolutely perfect. Yet the brethren whose hearts are full of love, even though they have sawdust in their eye of faith, or intellectual discernment or spiritual discernment, and perhaps also splinters in their hands, which affect all the deeds of life, and render their work imperfect, and though many of them have splinters in their feet also, so that their walk is by no means perfect, as they would desire it to be—yet if they have the spirit of faith and of love and of sympathy, the spirit of Christ, they are his, and far more acceptable to him than any could possibly be who are devoid of the spirit of love and sympathy, and who therefore in this parable are represented as wholly perverted in their judgment of others, because possessing so little of the Lord's spirit and so much of the spirit of the Adversary—the great "accuser of the brethren."

This loveless, fault-finding, brethren-accusing class the Lord denominates hypocrites. Why? Because in finding fault with others they are evidently wishing to give the inference that they are not afflicted with the same malady of sin themselves; they evidently wish to give the impression that they are holy, and since they know in their own hearts that this is untrue, and that they have many failings, many imperfections—therefore their course is hypocritical, false, deceptive, displeasing to God. Their claim that their fault-finding is prompted by love for the erring and a hatred of sin is deceptive and hypocritical as our Lord's words clearly show. Otherwise they would find plenty to do in hating and condemning and battling with their own sins and weaknesses;—casting out their own rafter of self-conceit and hypocracy. The experiences thus gained would make them very tender and merciful and loving in their assistance of others.

All of the "brethren" should carefully view this picture which our Lord portrayed, and should note well to see whether or not they have any of the evil disposition of heart—fault-finding, nagging, harsh criticism and denunciation—different degrees of the same fault. If they find any trace of such a "beam" of lovelessness and self-conceit in their spiritual eye, they should go at once to the great Physician and have it thoroughly eradicated, that they thus may speedily become gentle, sympathetic assistants to the "brethren," and be prepared as successful surgeons and physicians for the great work of the Millennial age—the kindly and sympathetic opening of the blind eyes of humanity and the healing of all the wounds of sin.

Tying Grape Clusters to Thorn Bushes

But while we are not to judge our "brother," who with us professes to be endeavoring to walk in the footsteps of our Master, and who gives any evidences at all of sincerity in the matter, we nevertheless are to do a certain kind of judging as respects mankind in general. Elsewhere the Lord intimates that "by their fruits" we are to "know" grapevines from thorn-bushes, and figs from thistles. And in this sermon he intimates that we are to judge or discern as between the brethren and "dogs" and "swine"—the selfish, the sensual, who mind earthly things and who have never been begotten of the spirit of God. We may know these by outward evidences, for "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his;" and **if he is none of his, not a branch of the Vine, we are not to waste our time in trying to tie onto him bunches of the fruits of the vine.** We are not to attempt to deceive others or ourselves by helping to counterfeit the true holy spirit in the selfish, unregenerate world. We are not to expect that this class, whose appreciation is only for earthly things, to appreciate holy, heavenly things, any more than we would expect that dogs would appreciate the difference between meat from the butcher-shop and the holy, consecrated meat eaten only by the priesthood. We are not to expect that the swinish and groveling, who think only of money and the things of this life, would appreciate the pearls of truth which are so precious in the sight of the brethren, begotten of the spirit. . . .

Indeed, in some respects the efforts which have been expended upon the "dogs" and the "swine"—the thorn-bushes and the thistles, endeavoring to tie to these various imitations of the fruits of the spirit of Christ, and to make the meat of the household palatable to them, have been positively injurious to the Lord's cause. The "brethren" have been neglected in the endeavor to feed the "dog" class; the making ready of the Bride for the Bridegroom, and adorning her with the pearls of truth, has been neglected in the endeavor to interest the "swine" in the pearls. The real value of the true vine, in producing good fruit, and the wide difference of nature between it and a bramble bush, has been greatly obscured by the appropriation of the vine's natural fruitage to the bramble. **Let us not be wise above what is written;** let us attend in the present time to the work which God has appointed for this age, and leave to his appointed time the general work for the world of mankind.

How to Overcome Loveless Self-Conceit

Returning to the lessons which the "brethren" must learn, and possibly having specially in mind the correction of the tendency to judge one another, our Lord gives instructions how these wrong qualities may be eradicated. We are to ask of the Lord the needed measure of love and sympathy which will hinder us from judging others, and which will help us in correcting our own defects. If we ask sincerely, truly, we will receive his grace and help in this direction. And while asking, it is our duty to be seeking the things which we lack, the holy spirit of love to fill our hearts; and if we seek it we shall find it. We are to knock upon the Lord's store-house of grace and blessing by continued efforts, as well as prayer without ceasing, and as a result it will surely be opened to us. The asking, the seeking, the knocking, will all imply faith in the Lord, which will be pleasing in his sight, and it will also imply faithfulness on our part and a desire to be conformed fully to the Lord's will. And these good desires of our hearts shall be gratified, because, as an earthly parent would respond to his child's request for earthly food, so will the Lord respond and supply grace in every time of need to his children. He will not deceive us nor give us evil things, when we desire the good, but will do for us exceedingly abundantly more than we could ask or think;

for is not our heavenly Father much better than any imperfect human father could possibly be?

Luke's reference to this discourse (11:13) declares that the good thing that God will be pleased to give these asking, seeking, knocking ones, is his holy spirit. And this is exactly what is needed, as an offset to the unholy, unloving, selfish, judging and fault-finding spirit of the flesh, which must be cast out. The antidote for the poison is that we should be filled with the holy spirit, the spirit of love, for "love worketh no ill to his neighbor;" love "suffereth long and is kind;" love "is not puffed up" to see the faults of others and to be blind to its own; it "vaunteth not itself" to be a general critic, fault-finder and "accuser of the brethren." Love is sympathetic, helpful, the spirit of God.—1 Cor. 13:4; Rom. 13:10.

"Working in You That Which Is Wellpleasing in His Sight."—Heb. 13:21.

"Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." The word "therefore" shows the connection between this and the preceding features of the lesson: it signifies that this will be a test or rule by which we may discern when and to what extent we are misjudging the motives of others, and officiously endeavoring to perform the very delicate operation of removing their splinters. This verse is therefore known as the "Golden Rule,"—the rule which God would have his people use in respect to all the affairs of life—especially in their relationship and dealings with the "brethren." When disposed to find a fault, or pick a flaw, when disposed to condemn another or to criticize another's faults, or to hold him up to odium, we can generally know of the propriety or impropriety of so doing or thinking by asking ourselves the question: Would I wish the brother to do, to say or to think thus respecting me, if I were he and he were I?

This rule, closely followed, will very generally be a guide, and yet we have known instances in which the Lord's people seemed so anxious for an excuse for slander, for evil speaking, for gossip, that they found some kind of a way of excusing themselves for the violation of the Golden Rule, even when they remembered it and at heart wished to obey it. Let us be very careful, dear brethren, how we handle the Lord's rule—that we do not handle the Word of God deceitfully—that we do not blind and deceive ourselves respecting its true importance—that we do not thus vitiate and impair our consciences—that we do not thus thwart our prayers for the holy spirit. For the holy spirit can flow into our hearts only as the channel is open; and the channel can be kept open only by keeping this Golden Rule continually at work at its full gauge.—Z. '00:73-75.

The Rewards of Sacrifice

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Rom. 12:1.

NOWHERE IN THE SCRIPTURES are we commanded by the Lord to sacrifice our earthly rights and privileges. The Divine commands end at the line of justice. In other words, justice and righteousness are one and the same thing. Sacrifice, self-denial, taking up the cross to follow Jesus, are all propositions away beyond the Divine Law. The Law Covenant proffered a perpetuation of human life to all who would fulfil its requirements. None of the Jews, with whom that Covenant was made, were able to fulfil those requirements, except the One who came from above and for whom was provided a perfect human body, which enabled Him to keep the requirements of the Law Covenant, entitling Him, therefore, to everlasting earthly life.

The New Law Covenant, under the antitypical Mediator, will offer the same reward of everlasting human perfection to all who will fulfil its requirements. Its superiority over the first Law Covenant will consist in its having a better Mediator, capable of helping mankind fully out of condemnation, death and weakness and authorized so to do because of the merit of His "better sacrifices."

But while Jesus, born under the Law, was obligated to the conditions of that Covenant and fulfilled them and through them had a right to everlasting earthly life. He did more. He sacrificed that earthly life—laid it down—permitted sinful men to take it from Him without resistance, although He had the power to call for legions of angels for protection. This was His sacrifice. He did not sacrifice sinful weaknesses, for He had none. He sacrificed perfect life and all His legal rights and privileges. His reward for so doing was exaltation from the human nature to the divine nature—far above that of angels, principalities and powers. (Eph. 1:21.) Thus exalted He has the human rights (which He never forfeited) to give Adam and his race—their ransom-price. These He will give to them in the end of this Age, applying them to the sealing of the New Law Covenant, under which Israel and all mankind may be restored to all that was lost through the first man's disobedience. Meantime, the glorified Redeemer uses that sacrificial merit (which He intends to give eventually to the world) to cover (imputatively) the blemishes of those of the household of faith who may hear the Divine call (and accept the same) to follow in the footsteps of Jesus—to sacrifice and suffer with Him in the flesh, that they may be glorified and reign with Him on the spirit plane beyond the veil.

Sin-Offering Sacrifices Acceptable During the Gospel Age Only

Throughout this Gospel Age the Law Covenant has continued upon the Jews only, the remainder of the world being without any Covenant with God and waiting for the "times of restitution" under the New Law Covenant of the future. (Acts 3:19-21; Jer. 31:31-34.) It is during this time (the Gospel Age) that God draws and calls a certain loyal class and gives them an opportunity of sharing with their Redeemer in sacrificial death. The faithful will be counted His members or His Bride or joint-heirs in His Kingdom of glory and honor and immortality. All men, in proportion as they know the Divine will (what is just, from the Divine standpoint), are correspondingly in duty bound to fulfil that righteous requirement or Law of God to the extent of ability. But those desirous of following in the footsteps of Jesus are shown what they can do more than justice; but they are not commanded to do more. **All sacrificing is a privilege,** not a duty, not a command. In harmony with this, St. Paul writes, not commandingly, but entreatingly, "I beseech you, brethren, . . . present your bodies living sacrifices." He did not command this. To have made it a command would at once prevent the opportunity of sacrifice. What we sacrifice is something that is not commanded. Whatever is commanded of God is obligation and not sacrifice.

The Ancient Worthies presented their bodies, laid down their lives, renouncing earthly rights, but they did not sacrifice. Why? Because it is one thing to kill and another to have the slain creature accepted of God as a sacrifice. God did not call for human sacrifices prior to Jesus' sacrifice of Himself. God was unwilling to accept imperfect, blemished creatures at His altar. They might lay down their lives, but He would not count them sacrifices. Jesus was accepted as a sacrifice because He was perfect and His followers, since Pentecost, have been acceptable as sacrifices, because they are perfect—made so by the Redeemer's imputation to them of a sufficiency of His merit to compensate their blemishes.

Thus this Gospel Age is called the "acceptable day (or time) of the Lord," because, during this Gospel Age God is willing to accept a predestinated number as joint-sacrificers with Jesus. But as soon as that predestinated number shall have been completed the acceptable time will immediately end. No more presentations will be accepted as sacrifices—the antitypical Day of Atonement will have ended.

But suppose that some should present themselves after the close of the acceptable time; what would be their status and God's dealing with them?

Since God is unchangeable, we must assume that He would always be pleased to have His creatures devote their lives wholly and unreservedly to the doing of His will, as He was pleased with the faithfulness of the Ancient Worthies to lay down their lives before a Covenant of sacrifice was in force. We may reason that as God has promised human perfection to those Ancient Worthies who laid down their lives, He would be willing similarly to reward any who might follow the same course after the completion of the Church—after the ending of the acceptable time of sacrifice.

Quite likely, therefore, there will be some in the end of this Age who, although faithful unto death, will not have been begotten of the Holy Spirit and not attain the spirit plane of being in the resurrection, but who will come forth members of the same class as the Ancient Worthies, who were developed before this Age began.

The Presentation of Oneself Always a Reasonable Service

In view of these facts our advice to all who love the Lord and who desire to be in complete fellowship with Him is the same message that has gone forth throughout this Age—"We beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, present your bodies living sacrifices." We cannot now assure them that, after presenting themselves as sacrifices, God will accept them as such and grant them spirit-begetting to a new nature; but we can assure them that it will be their reasonable service and that God always gives large rewards to those who manifest their faith and loyalty towards Him and His cause. We can tell them, too, that, to our understanding, the Scriptures teach that the Ancient Worthy class (of which they may be a part if they fail to be accepted to the new nature) will be highly honored of God, perfect on the human plane and made "princes in all the earth." We can assure them that, to our understanding, these princes will have a glorious precedence over the remainder of mankind as the special representatives of the invisible Messiah class for a thousand years. We can assure them that, to our understanding, after participating in that glorious work, these princes will be uplifted at the close of the Millennium to the spirit plane of being—as part of the antitypical Levites.

All should be alike anxious to lay down their lives in the service of God and of His Truth. To say that we would refuse to serve because any uncertainty would prevail in our minds respecting the character of our reward would be to show our unworthiness of any favor of God, for, to be acceptable to Him, our service must not be rendered to obtain the reward, but to serve righteousness and to please God! "I delight to do Thy will, O God"—everything written in the Book. . . .—Z. '11:180, 181.

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A just man will not fall into sin. The very most that could happen to him would be to stumble. There are various causes for stumbling. But if the heart is right, the man will rise again; for the Lord will show him that he has made a mistake and will point out the way to him by which he may recover himself. If he is a lover of righteousness, he will desire to press on toward that which is right, just, approved of the Lord, even if he should stumble many times.—Psa. 37:23, 24; Prov. 24:16; Z. '13:116.

Some one has said that those who would be the best friends need a third object in which both are interested, and that then, like the radii of a circle, the nearer they come to this center the nearer they approach to one another. So with these men: (David and Jonathan) their loyalty to God and to the principles of truth and righteousness exemplified in God, was the strong bond of their friendship. This same principle is exemplified in all true, unselfish love.—Z. '03:332.

"God Is Not Mocked"

"WHAT manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy living and God-likeness?" In view of the solemnity of the situation, how "circumspect" we all should be! How we should scrutinize our every act and word and thought! And our thoughts require our special care, because by the **thoughts and intents of the heart** we are being judged. And words and acts proceed therefrom. How often **ambition** hides its envious desires under the cloak of **duty!** How many of the fires of the "Holy Inquisition" were lighted by the torch of "duty!" Let us each be on guard. Ourselves or others we might deceive, but not God, who says, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; he that doeth righteousness is righteous"—not merely he who professes. He whose acts and words are loving, gentle, kind, considerate under trying conditions gives evidence of being begotten of the God of love and of having developed much Christ-likeness! Consider our Lord's love for his enemies and his forbearance for them when railed at, "Come down from the cross!" Consider how, when reviled and slandered, he reviled and slandered not in return! Consider how gentle was his reproof of the perfidious Judas and how he merely hinted a reproof to Peter, who denied him with cursings! In his case surely Love was ready to cover a multitude of faults. Let us not be easily offended nor of implacable spirit. Let us with generous and forgiving spirit say with the Apostle, "None of these things move me"—from my stand at perfect love; it shall grow more rooted and grounded in proportion as it is tested. Let us also be on guard against the spirit which is envious of the honors, privileges and blessings granted to another. Contrariwise let us have so much of the spirit of love that we will rejoice with all who rejoice in the Lord and will mourn with all in distress. To feel even a coolness of sentiment in connection with the prosperity of a brother or a lack of interest in his welfare is a sign of serious danger—that we have slipped from the mark. This should alarm us and lead to fresh energy.—Z. '08:88.

"Pray Always"

"Pray without ceasing."—I Thess. 5:17.

A LITTLE QUOTATION from somebody's brain seems wonderfully fitting in the consideration of our text—"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." It is a complete definition, for sometimes we pray with groanings that cannot be uttered.

There is one form of prayer, one feature of prayer, which is very appropriate to us, namely, thanksgiving. Yet the Scriptures discriminate between prayer, praise and thanksgiving, and use these words in the same connection, as representing various features of worship, communion with God. In the sense of petition our definition also applies when we include thanksgiving in our prayers. Expressed or unexpressed, prayer is the soul's sincere desire. **Prayer that would not be the soul's sincere desire would not be acceptable.** We may not always know how to render our thanks to God, but it is comforting to remember that the Lord knows our thoughts and is willing to accept our feeble expressions.

All those who have come to the Lord must first have recognized their need of coming and His readiness, willingness and ability to supply all necessary things. We need rest and peace and life everlasting. These we do not find in the world around us. There is no real peace outside of the Lord's provision: "My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27.) The things which the Lord has promised to His people are things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man.

Whoever, therefore, has received the earnest of the Spirit has something to desire, something to look forward to, something to pray for. Therefore we pray, Thy Kingdom come, that the blessings which the Lord has promised shall be fulfilled, not only those for the world, but also those for the Church.

Should Pray for Forgiveness Even as We Forgive

As the Christian goes through the world he finds various things to distract his heart. But since he finds that the Lord has **promised** that peace he should **look for** that peace, should expect it. We should pray to God for the things that we think we ought to have. But we are to take His superior wisdom as expressed in His Word as our guide; and we are to ask according to His Word. If we have a measure of peace and of blessing, we should pray all the more for the **fulness** of joy. While we have been cleansed from original sin by the precious blood of Christ, we must remember that we have daily trespasses; and we should pray daily, "Forgive us our trespasses." This request the Lord answers on condition that we ask for forgiveness of our trespasses **as** we forgive those who trespass against us. So the Christian will find a great deal to pray for in all of life's affairs.

The Christian, however, should not be so absorbed in meditation that he cannot do his work. But **the spirit of prayer should be with him**, so that in every affair of life, in every perplexity, he would be ever ready to turn his mind toward the Lord for His blessings and to look to the Lord regarding all daily interests; for we are the Lord's. This course would be a life of prayer without ceasing. We do not cease to ask for the coming of the Kingdom simply because we have asked for it once. We do not cease to pray for our daily food. We acknowledge that all good things come from Him. We recognize that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17); and that He who gave His Son for us is ever ready to give to those who seek to serve Him.

This attitude of heart is praying without ceasing. Sometimes the thought may only flash through the mind, but, nevertheless, it brings a blessing to us. All of God's dealings with the Elect class are for their development; and one feature of this development is to learn to know whence our blessings come and to appreciate the fact that God is the Giver, and that "no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly."—Z. '11:364, 365.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

It is the sympathetic ones who are most successful in helping the various members of the Body of Christ out of the besetments and difficulties incident to the following of the Lord in the present time. Oh, let us study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's injunction, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet!"
—Z. '12:275.

◆

In the Divine Plan of the Ages we found something so far above our own conception and the conceptions of all others that we at once realized it to be **God's Plan,** of which he declares truly, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans higher than your plans." (Isa. 55:9.) We realize instinctively what a pearl of great price we have found—a matchless pearl—and that it would be the height of folly to look for any other that would compare with it. With the poet we declare,

"It satisfies our longings
As nothing else could do."

We confess, therefore, that we are not searching for other plans of the ages.—Z. '09:293, 294.

◆

While it is refreshing and exhilarating to look down into the future and think of the blessings to come, it is important that we draw practical lessons and apply them to ourselves, that we may be of that New Jerusalem class, the Bride glorified, from whom the river of the water of life will issue. **There is no doubt that it will all be accomplished, because the Word of the Lord has spoken it.** The whole question for us is whether we or others will be the Lord's ministers, servants, honored agents in causing the blessing of the Lord to fill the whole earth. The more we love the glorious prospects set before us in the word, the more we will strive for present **participation in the sufferings of Christ,** in laying down our lives for the brethren, and for future participation in the glories of Christ in the blessing of all the families of the earth.—Z. '05:270.

◆

The truth seems to take hold on the stronger characters rather than on the weaker ones. These have in their flesh more of the firmness, grittiness and the combativeness than have many others who are too pliable and wishy-washy to be acceptable to the Lord as members of the "Little flock" of overcomers. Thus we see that the very quality which makes us acceptable to the Lord and which is one qualification of the overcoming position is a serious disadvantage in some respects, when a number of these of like strong character come together as a Church. Even a diamond surrounded by mud would cut nothing, would scratch nothing; but place a dozen diamonds together, and the more you get rid of the mud element the more gritting, scouring and cutting there is likely to be. So it is with the Lord's jewels—the more they come together the more they get wakened up, the more opportunities there will be for friction, and the greater necessity there will be that they all be **thoroughly imbedded and covered with the Holy Spirit,** which like oil, is smooth and unctuous and tends to prevent friction.
—Z. '06:104.

◆

Be of good courage! Our heavenly Father lives; our Redeemer lives; his power is as great as it ever was. **All** of his Daniels are safe from the lions. **All** of his Elijahs shall be fed. **All** of the widows shall be supplied with meal. **The condition is faith, trust, obedience.**—Z. '05:270.

◆

Whether it cost us much or little, our whole course of life is to be honest, upright. Our lives are to be devoted to the cause of righteousness—we are to see to it that we do nothing contrary to the principles of righteousness. Sincerity, honesty of purpose, should make all our life as open as the Day when everything wicked is to be disclosed. By showing the right and exposing the wrong deeds, thus making known the character of these, the Lord will put men on test as to which they love.

For those who love evil, wickedness, after they see it in its true colors, after they see where it leads and all its consequences, and shall have had full opportunity to know and to choose between right and wrong, light and darkness—for such God's portion will be death—Second Death. The only final reward and punishment for evil is **destruction.** "All the wicked will God destroy."—Z. '13:325.

◆

Our Lord has opened up before us the chart of his wonderful plan of the ages and has shown us the written specifications, so that the things to come might be as surely known to us by faith as the things past and present are known by history and experience.—Z. '92:25.

To be established in the faith is one thing, but to be established in Christian character and in all the graces of the spirit is quite another.—Z. '02: 308.

◆

He who accepted the consecrated Stephen, and advanced him step by step in his service, is ready and willing today to take and use those who are similarly consecrated, and burning with heavenly zeal. He is willing to make of such burning and shining lights in the Church, **if they in turn are willing to suffer with him**, that they may also be glorified together in due time.—Rom. 8:17. Z. '02: 14.

◆

According to this, the law of our Head, the terms and conditions of membership in his body, we are our brothers' keepers: each one has a responsibility for his fellow—not to intrude upon him as a busybody, but to look out for his interests, his welfare, and to do all for that brother that he would have that brother do for him—yea, more than this: that he would lay down his life for his brother, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her. If all the Lord's brethren could **realize** this to be the divine rule governing the New Creation, and realize that **only those** who do live up to this rule are making their calling and election sure, what an awakening of zeal amongst the brethren for the service one of another would result, and what a blessing would come to all of the Lord's dear flock! —Z. '07: 28.

◆

When we consider that "we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12), we realize that the contest is a very unequal one **unless we lay hold upon the strength which God supplies to us through Christ.** —Z. '93: 72.

◆

We concede that we are unable to read the heart, but we are fully satisfied to accept the divine decision in such matters, and to trust that when in due time all the secrets of this present time shall be disclosed, we then shall be able to understand the meaning of the Lord's selections more completely than we do now—we shall then be able to see what a difference there was between the hearts of those the Lord accepted and the hearts of those outwardly humble, whom he did not so highly favor in respect to the Kingdom call. Meantime, we must simply wait and trust the Lord and accept His decisions, as expressed by our dear Redeemer when he said, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight."—Luke 10: 21. Z. '03: 223.

◆

Our Lord wished, evidently, to draw a sharp line of distinction between all other classes and those followers who would walk in his steps, bearing their crosses after him. It is of this class that he declares, "No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God." (Luke 9: 62.) This special class must be thoroughly imbued with a zeal for God and for righteousness; must gain some reasonable conceptions of the good things which God has in reservation for them: must have some appreciation of the Kingdom privileges, else they will not be persevering enough, nor zealous enough, to "fight the good fight of faith" and overcome the spirit of the world, with the Lord's assisting grace.—Z. '03: 342, 343.

◆

How carefully we need to guard our hearts against the slightest rising of pride and worldly ambition, and against every root of bitterness which, springing up, might trouble us. There are thousands of occurrences and circumstances in life which are calculated to bring us into bondage to the spirit of the world, and only those who keep a vigilant watch and an ever-prayerful attitude can hope to be kept in this evil day. Temptations and trials seldom give us warning of their approach, and therefore our armor of righteousness must ever be adjusted and securely buckled on.

"Leave no unguarded place,
  No weakness of the soul;
Take every virtue, every grace,
  And fortify the whole."—Z. '92: 281.

◆

Present opportunities for sacrificing service are to be esteemed, not only as the greatest privileges of the present life, but also as the greatest privileges ever offered or to be offered.—Z. '92: 258.

◆

How much strength and courage we must have if we would come off more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us! And here is the point necessary to be remembered, viz., that **this is not our battle but the Lord's,** that we are not fighting at our own charges but with his commission and with his promised assistance and support. "I will be with thee, I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." No wonder that the Apostle, gaining a clear view of the situation, exclaimed, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13.) And so it is with all the true followers of the Lord: we do not know how much we can accomplish, we do not know if there would be any limitations to our powers within the limits of the Lord's commands and while upheld by his promise. We must remember, however, the limitations, "Without me ye can do nothing," and again, that what we are to do is clearly indicated in the divine Word, and that we are not to look for nor expect divine aid beyond those limitations: just as in the case of Joshua and Natural Israel. Had they gone outside the boundaries of Canaan specified in the Lord's Word they could not have expected the divine assistance. Here again we remember the Master's words, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you"—under these limitations we can do and be and pray anything and everything, but outside these limitations we must expect nothing.—Z. '07: 283.

◆

The Scriptures clearly indicate that in the end of this Gospel age God purposes a cleansing of his sanctuary, his temple. There will be nothing in or connected with the Temple in glory that will need to be cleansed, nothing impure, nothing that defileth will enter therein; but the Temple, the Church of the present time, stipulated to be composed merely, solely, of the consecrated believers, has become a mixed multitude.

The type gives us a suggestion respecting the character of the cleansing, that it mainly affects those who make merchandise of holy things—those who are associated with the Lord's work for selfish reasons, because "their bread is buttered on that side." All of this class must be driven out: the Lord himself will see to the work. The Lord's house is not to be a house of merchandise. The Lord seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth, and not those who seek the loaves and fishes or any earthly advantage. He will therefore present the truth in such a form that it will be a blessing to the proper class, and separate all of the improper class by a measure of odium in connection with the King and his faithful. All such will be separated from the true Temple class, all such will be angry with the Master and his followers, as were the merchants and money-changers in the typical Temple, and they will have their sympathizers also, as they did.—Z. '06: 283.

◆

The weaker brethren are not to judge and censure the others, neither the stronger brethren to judge and censure the weaker. All are to remember that God is the Judge, and that each one needs to criticize himself rather than to criticize his brother—to make sure that he himself has a conscience void of offence toward God and man.—Z. '07: 332.

◆

It is the duty of the New Creature to detect the imperfections, errors and shortcomings of the flesh, and to go immediately to the Throne of the Heavenly Grace with them, to obtain mercy and forgiveness. Only those with tender consciences will keep their garments unspotted.—Z. '13: 75.

◆

HABITS MAKE CHARACTER

It is our duty to watch ourselves that we do no harm, that our body does good service and not injury to ourselves. A man or a woman or a child who goes through the house slamming doors, and merely says, "I was in a hurry and could not help it," is not gentle. He is not a gentleman or she is not a gentlewoman. Whoever fails to cultivate gentleness is failing to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit. He is losing a glorious opportunity of practising upon himself—of keeping his body under, of getting himself into the way of doing things in a sensible, reasonable manner. The person who bangs doors and goes about noisily is one who does not think of other people and their interests. When we talk about ourselves all the time and think about ourselves all the time, it is an evidence of selfishness. In all these things the Lord expects us to keep our bodies under, and to show carefulness in keeping our bodies under, **in the little things of life as well as in the great things.**

If our Lord Jesus were here, none of us would expect Him to go about noisily, slamming the doors of the house, or to be wasteful. Our Lord was most economical in the two cases where he fed the four thousand and the five thousand. Although there was plenty of food to feed the multitude, He told His disciples to "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."—John 6:12.

Thus did God's dear Son view matters; and we desire to be copies of Him. In building character we must wilfully and intentionally do right. The person who practices in the little things will be also careful in the larger matters. Even the pins, the needles and the paper we should use carefully. Not that any should be miserly—not willing to give one a pin if he wants one—but do not think to waste even them, saying, "Oh, the pins cost only a trifle anyway!" The Lord was always generous, but He was economical. So we should all be. We should keep the body under the new mind. The new mind should be looking out for these matters and keeping the old body in service.—Z. '12:112.

◆

All the trials and difficulties, all the battling with the world and the Adversary, all the adversities coming to ourselves and to others of the Lord's consecrated, are but encouraging evidences that we are the Lord's and that he is working out for us, as well as in us, his good pleasure. With this view before our mental vision the Spirit of God witnesses with our spirit that we are having exactly the experiences which his faithful should expect and that all things will work in us for our welfare—because we are his—and for the glory of his Kingdom.

"His love in times past forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink."
—Z. '08: 312.

◆

We must let the transforming work go on within our own hearts, while we do all in our power to inspire and cultivate the same spirit in others.—Z. '92:188.

◆

"LET US WATCH AND BE SOBER"

The Apostle's exhortation is well worthy of being continually borne in mind "Let us watch and be sober." Let us watch in the sense of taking careful notice of all the directions which the Lord our God has given us, respecting what would not be acceptable service to him. Let us watch ourselves, striving to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of the great High Priest, who was, we are sure, right and acceptable to the Father in every particular. Let us be sober. Let us have the spirit of Christ, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of meekness, the spirit of gentleness, the spirit of love for God, for our fellows, and for all men, seeking as we have opportunity, to do them good. **Let us be sober in the sense that we will not be frivolous**; that while happy, joyous in the Lord, free from the anxious cares that are upon many others through misapprehension of our Father's character and plan, we may, nevertheless, be sober in the sense of earnest, appreciative of present opportunities and privileges in connection with the Lord's service;—not thoughtlessly negligent, letting opportunities and privileges slip through our hands to be afterwards regretted.
—Z. '02: 239.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER FORTY-FIVE

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Discipline

The hammer of Thy discipline, O Lord,
Strikes fast and hard. Life's anvil rings again
To Thy strong strokes. And yet we know 'tis then
That from the heart's hot iron all abroad
The rich glow spreads. Great Fashioner Divine,
Who spareth not, in Thy far-seeing plan,
The blows that shape the character of man,
Or fire that makes him yield to touch of Thine.
Strike on, then, if Thou wilt! For thou alone
Canst rightly test the temper of our will,
Or tell how these base metals may fulfil
Thy purpose—making all our life Thine own.
Only we do beseech Thee, let the pain
Of fiery ordeals through which we go
Shed all around us such a warmth and glow,
Such cheerful showers of sparks in golden rain,
That hard hearts may be melted, cold hearts fired,
And callous hearts be taught to feel and see
That discipline is more to be desired
Than all the ease that keeps them back from Thee.
—Z. '12:374.

Doubtless it is the experience of all the Lord's children that in proportion as their hearts are clean their spiritual vision is clear. And in proportion as they depart from this purity, in that proportion they would have less and less opportunity for service—for bearing the vessels of the Truth.—Z. '13:185.

◇

We note our Lord's command to the servants to "fill the water-pots with water." Remembering the statement of the prophet, corroborated by our Lord's own words "without a parable spake he not unto them," we are inclined to surmise that this, his first miracle, contains some spiritual lesson for us. Endeavoring to draw such a lesson from this miracle, in harmony with the general testimony of the Word, we reason thus: The waterpots symbolize the Lord's people; their number, six, might indicate that it refers to the Lord's people in the present time of evil, because the number six is a symbol for imperfection and evil condition, as seven is the symbol for completeness and perfection. Thus six days of the week are set apart for labor, while the seventh is set apart for rest and refreshment; likewise the six thousand years of the world's history are permitted by the Lord to be evil, through man's disobedience and fall; while in the seventh thousand God proposes to bring in his Millennial Kingdom—his reign of everlasting righteousness.

The water with which the water-pots were commanded to be filled, is in Scripture the symbol for the truth, the "water of life"; not merely the word of truth, but the word accompanied by and infused with the spirit of the truth—it is with this that the Master commands that we shall be filled. In the symbolic miracle the servants obeyed; not doubtfully or slothfully did they fill them half full, but, as it is recorded, "They filled them up to the brim." So it should be with us; having heard the Master's word, "Be ye filled with the spirit," we should draw abundantly from the fountain of grace and truth, nor cease until we are filled with the spirit "to the brim"—completely. And if we so do the Master's commands, what may we expect as a result? We may expect, as illustrated in the symbolic miracle, that the water will ultimately be changed into wine—the symbol for unalloyed pleasure, heavenly joys.

In the symbol the miracle of change from water into wine came only to those vessels which were filled to the brim with water; so, likewise, the Lord has promised a still greater change to his faithful followers who receive the treasure of divine truth, and its spirit into their "earthen vessels," and who are filled with it.—Z. '03:86.

◇

It is true that the Gospel of Christ is revolutionary in its character; that whenever it enters the heart of a man it keeps turning things upside down continually, until it is either ejected or has produced a transformation of heart and life. There is no peace between right and wrong, or light and darkness, in any heart. Peace can be secured only by giving way either to the light or to the darkness; either to the truth or to the error; and since the error is the more popular, the more general, the majority choose peace along that line. The Lord's people, however, the sincere lovers of righteousness, can have peace on no other terms than those of loyalty to the Lord and his Word, and the principles of his righteousness.—Z. '03:12.

◇

The Scriptures intimate that the followers of Jesus must not expect full justice in the world, nor always to be rightly understood. They, too, are to remember that the cup of their experiences, like that of their Master, is supervised by Heavenly Wisdom; and that if they are obedient to the Divine arrangement, they will find that all of their experiences will eventually work out to their highest welfare. "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God."—Z. '14:317.

EASTERN CONVENTIONS

The proposed Eastern Conventions are postponed until further notice, as both Brother Heard and Brother Edwards have been refused admission into the United States by the American Immigration Authorities.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FORTY-FIVE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

"Mark the Perfect Man! Behold the Upright!"

Matt. 4:25-5:12.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

WHAT characteristics are essential to our attainment of the most blessed conditions God has to bestow? What must we be in order to inherit the Kingdom, be filled with righteousness, obtain divine mercy and everlasting comfort, be called the sons of God, and be permitted to see his face, obtaining a great reward in heaven? What question, what topic, what Bible lesson, could be more interesting to us or a more profitable study than this one? The great Teacher made it the topic, the text, of one of his principal discourses at his first advent, and caused the gist of his argument to be recorded for the admonition of his true followers throughout this Gospel age.

While the character of our Lord, which we as his followers are to copy, is one; and the attainment of that one character or disposition means the attainment of all the blessings God has to bestow; nevertheless, in order to present the matter the more distinctly to our minds the Lord divides this one character or disposition into different sections, giving us a view of each particular part; just as a photographer would take a front view, right-side view, left-side view, rear view and angling views, of any interesting subject, so that all the details of construction might be clearly discernible.

The First Essential

The first character-picture which our Lord presents we may reasonably assume was in some respects at least most important: It is Humility. "Blessed are the humble-minded (poor in spirit) for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." We do not understand this to signify that humility is the only essential grace, and that whoever is humble will therefore attain the Kingdom: but rather that to the attainment of the Kingdom humility is a prerequisite of first importance. In other words, while all humble people will not attain the Kingdom, **the Kingdom cannot be attained by anyone who is not humble**: the Kingdom is theirs, in the sense that it is possible for this class to accept the terms and to attain to the honors and blessings, while all of a different attitude of mind—the proud, the haughty, the self-conceited, are absolutely debarred from any possibility of attaining the Kingdom so long as these contrary conditions lie at the foundation of their characters.

O that all of the Lord's people might see this point clearly and distinctly, and realize once and forever that "The Lord resisteth the proud and showeth his favors to the humble" **exclusively!** How this thought should put a guard upon every one of the Lord's little ones who is seeking to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son. How jealously they would watch and foster the development of this spirit of humility in their own hearts, and how it would be more and more discernible to others in their daily course of life, and what a blessing and what an influence for good, especially upon the "brethren," would result!

Growing out of this first essential quality or characteristic, as a tree of many branches out of the root, come the other graces of the spirit, which the Lord has declared blessed—divinely approved. How different our Lord's teachings in this respect from all human teachings! Earthly wisdom would say, on the contrary: Hold up your head; think well of yourself, if you would have other people think well of you; be high-spirited, instead of poor in spirit, a little haughty, rather than of humble demeanor; it will have a greater influence in many respects, for no one will think more highly of you than you think of yourself, nor give you credit for more than you claim; hence, think highly of yourself, and claim much, carrying a high head, and having a lofty and self-important look.

No doubt there is worldly wisdom in the worldly counsel; no doubt there is some truth in the worldly suggestion, so far as success in earthly matters in the present time is concerned. But here as in other instances, the Lord shows us that his ways are not as man's ways, but higher, as the heavens are higher than the earth. He assures us that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted in due time, while he who exalts himself shall be brought low, in due time. (Matt. 23:12.) In the Scriptures he points us to our dear Redeemer as the illustration of the humble and obedient one, whom he has now exalted to the right hand of divine power; and our attention is also called to the great Adversary, who, taking a reverse course, sought to exalt himself, and has been abased, and is ultimately to be destroyed.—Phil. 2:9; Heb. 2:14.

A sharp distinction should be noted between being poor in spirit and being poor in pocket, or in intellectual gifts and attainments. We have all seen people who were poor in these earthly senses, yet proud in spirit. The point to be noticed is that whatever our financial or intellectual gifts and conditions, the thing acceptable in the divine sight is humility of spirit. Such a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which cometh from above—they must have a humble appreciation of their own deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time, only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind—for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ.

Consolations the Reward of Sympathy.

The second beatitude or blessed condition mentioned by our Lord stands closely related to the first —"Blessed are they that mourn." Mourning of itself is not a grace, but it betokens an attitude of mind which is acceptable in the Lord's sight. Nor should we think of a mournful spirit, without consolation or joys, as being a Christian spirit. We cannot suppose that our Heavenly Father and the holy angels are continual mourners, as they would certainly be if mourning possessed any merit of itself. The thought rather is, Blessed are ye that mourn now—to whom present earthly conditions are not entirely satisfactory and happifying—who are not blind to the difficulties and trials through which the human family as a whole is passing—sin and sickness, pain and trouble, dying and crying; blessed are those who have sympathy of heart under present conditions, and to whom they are not satisfactory; for the time is coming when, under God's providence, a better order of things shall be instituted, and their dissatisfaction with present conditions will but bring them into closer sympathy and fellowship with those better things for which the divine plan is preparing. When God's Kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven, all cause for mourning and for sorrow and for tears will be done away: that will be a time for consolation, for satisfaction, to this class.

Indeed, a good measure of comfort comes to the Lord's people even in the present age—through faith built upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word. The fact that they are able to discern the wrongs, the inequities, the distresses of the present time, creates in this class that very condition of heart to which divine promises appeal, whereas others not so touched at heart with sympathy for the groaning creation, are unable to so thoroughly appreciate the hopes set before us in the gospel. Hence it is by a natural law that such are drawn to the Lord's Word, and are enabled to draw therefrom consolation which speaks peace to their hearts, and gives them an inner joy which the less sympathetic cannot know under present conditions. Blessed are the sympathetic! . . . .

How the Gentle Inherit.

The third of these graces which the Lord declares blessed is Meekness, or, as we should say, Gentleness. Webster's Dictionary defines meekness to be, "Submission to the divine will; patience and gentleness from moral and religious motives." It will be perceived that there is quite a difference between this patient, gentle submission to the divine will, and the ordinary gentleness and patience which may frequently be exercised simply for the gratification of selfish desires. Patient submission to the divine will is impossible to those who have not the first grace in the list, a humble mind: the proud and self-willed find it impossible to be submissive to divine conditions: self rises up, perverts their judgments, and misleads their consciences to such an extent that they cannot have full confidence in divine providence, but feel that they must put forth their hand and steady the ark.

Moreover, patient submission can be developed only in those who mourn, in the sense of having large sympathies, and who have been comforted by the blessed promises of God, through which the holy spirit comforteth his people. Realizing the evils of our time, and that they are permitted of God for the present for a wise purpose, these not only sympathize with the groaning creation, but this sympathy and the comfort received as its reward tend to make them patient, submissive to the divine will. Remembering that all things are working together for good to them that love God, they are prepared to recognize divine providence in whatever may befall them, and prepared also to look for the lessons of those providences, as blessings which will be helpful to them and to others, in preparing for the future and eternal joys.

This third grace—patient submission to the divine will—which can be noted by those with whom we come in contact, might be said to be the outer manifestation of the second grace, which is inward, of the heart, and which might not be outwardly discerned by our fellow-creatures. The grace of sympathy manifests itself in our patient submissiveness in all the affairs of life, realizing that to those who are in Christ all matters are under divine supervision, and this patience in respect to God's providences in our own circumstances and affairs leads also naturally and properly to patience with others in their weaknesses and failures and ignorance, and leads properly to helpfulness toward them as we have opportunity.

These "meek," patiently submissive to the divine will, shall inherit the earth. The Lord did not mean, nor is it true, that the patient and submissive to the divine will will inherit the earth at the present time: quite to the contrary, the arrogant, the impatient, the aggressive, the selfish, succeed in grasping the chief things of power, of influence and of wealth now; and the patiently submissive have comparatively a poor chance. The reward of this grace, therefore, like the others, is future: following on under the divine leading, these shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; and the earth is a part of that great inheritance, which in turn, by divine arrangement, they shall bestow at the close of the Millennial age, upon the world of mankind who then survive—those proved worthy of eternal life by the Millennial tests.

Nevertheless, as there is a sense in which the Lord's people are comforted now, so there is also a sense in which they now inherit the earth—a figurative sense, by faith. The Apostle speaks of this when he says, "All things are yours—things present or things to come." (1 Cor. 3:21-23.) Those who have the proper humble attitude of mind and are patiently submissive to the divine will, get more of blessing out of the things of the present time than do their actual owners, because their hearts are in the attitude in which it is possible to receive blessing. The world, full of selfish craving, is never satisfied, never contented; the child of God, patiently submissive to the divine will, is always satisfied—

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me."

Filled With Righteousness.

The fourth blessing is that of Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness. No one can have this hunger and thirst unless he previously have to a considerable extent the previous characteristics. If he have not humility of mind he will be satisfied with his attainments of righteousness, being unable to see beyond his own low plane, unable to discern the heights and grandeurs of the divine perfection. He cannot hunger and thirst after that which he does not in some measure comprehend. Unless he have the spirit of sympathy, which discerns the wrongs, the inequities of our present time (which in great measure mankind is unable to counteract and overcome—by which some of the human family, very deficient in the virtues, have an overplus of wealth and influence and authority, while some possessing superior virtues have scarcely the necessities of life) he cannot yearn for the better condition of things which the Scriptures declare can only be introduced by the establishment of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom. It is a blessed indication then, if we find in our hearts a hungering and a thirsting for justice, for righteousness, for truth—an antipathy to untruth in every form, and to all injustice, in-equity—an antipathy, nevertheless, modified, influenced, controlled, by the third grace of this list, viz., by patient submission to the divine will. The control of this last quality is what the Apostle refers to when he says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men." It is this quality which stepping in hinders our hunger and thirst after righteousness, and our zeal for it, (both as respects truth and practice) from making us anarchistic or extremists in any sense of the word. This quality of hunger and thirst after righteousness, uncontrolled by the other of these graces of the spirit, has led many worldly people, as reformers, into wild excesses: whereas the child of God although having this same hunger and thirst in a larger degree than others, yet, under the control of the spirit of a sound mind, instructed from the Lord's Word, rests in his promises and waits for their fulfilment, patiently submissive, and assured of the victory of righteousness in God's due time, which he adopts as his time also.

Those who have and cultivate this blessed hunger and thirst shall be satisfied, abundantly satisfied, by and by, when God's Kingdom shall be established, and when as a result of its reign all evil and all sin, all in-equities (iniquities) shall be suppressed, and God's holy will shall "be done on earth even as it is done in heaven." Our hunger and thirst after righteousness is not to be destroyed, but, as our Lord promised, it is to be satisfied. The appetite for truth and righteousness will still be there, but the prevalence of truth and righteousness shall be its satisfaction.

In this grace, as in the others, there is a sense in which by faith we already attain some measure of the fulfilment to come—although it is but a foretaste. Those who have the hunger and thirst for righteousness, in line with the other graces of the spirit, find in the gracious promises of the Lord that comfort and consolation which already, even in this present life, can be assimilated by faith, and which proves to be "meat in due season for the household of faith," sustaining, strengthening, resting, and at least partially satisfying the hunger and the thirst, as they realize the divine provision for everlasting righteousness is exceeding and abundant, more than all that they could have thought or have requested.

How to Obtain Mercy.

The fifth blessed condition is that of Mercifulness. Mercy is the outward expression that man can discern, resulting from an appreciation of righteousness and a hunger and thirst for it in the renewed heart. After we have taken the preceding steps, and have learned to appreciate the inequities of the present time, and our own imperfections (unrighteousness) and those of other men; and after we have learned that God alone is able to right these matters in the full and complete sense, and that he has made provision for the righting of every wrong, and for the restoration to his favor of all who will accept his grace in Christ, to be made known to all in due time—it is then we begin to feel merciful, benevolent, kind, toward others, to an extent and degree that we could not feel these sentiments previously. Worldly people, who have not traveled on the pathway marked by these blessings of character and growths in grace, cannot to the same degree sympathize with nor feel merciful toward others.

The Lord lays great stress upon this quality of mercy, declaring that whatever else may be our attainments of knowledge or of grace, if we have not this one we can never be acceptable to him—if we do not have mercy upon others neither will our Heavenly Father have mercy upon us. And to insure that we do not consider this mercy to be merely an outward form, an expression of forgiveness and benevolence, our Lord expounds the matter, saying, "If ye do not from the heart forgive one another, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." It must be a genuine mercy, and not a feigned one; it must cover from sight, and so far as possible blot from memory, the failings and weaknesses of others, else it cannot hope for forgiveness and blotting out of its own shortcomings which its hunger and thirst for righteousness has clearly revealed to it. Only the merciful shall obtain mercy: and if we have not mercy at the hands of the Lord all is lost; for by nature we were children of wrath, even as others, and under just condemnation.

The exercise of mercy, benevolence, forgiveness, is a blessing, not merely because it is essential to our own forgiveness, and hence to our salvation, but also because this condition of heart which sympathizes with others in their failures and imperfections helps to rid our hearts of certain of the works of the flesh and of the devil, which incline to cling to the Lord's people long after they have made full consecration of themselves to the Lord and are seeking to "walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

The Apostle includes amongst the works of the flesh which require putting away, after we are fully the Lord's, the following—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. All of these qualities of selfishness are antagonized by mercy, and by it largely they are driven from their secret hidings and entrenched positions in our hearts. The blessed character of Mercy is closely related to Love, for it is in proportion as we obtain the Lord's spirit of love that we manifest toward others mercy, even as he has manifested his love toward us in the mercy extended to us in Christ. Love and mercy, consideration for others, has much to do with driving out envy. How can we envy those whom we love sincerely? How can we have malice toward those who are our enemies, if we love them and have mercy, compassion, upon them, and forgive them from our hearts? How can we have hatred toward them, if we have mercy upon them, and feel toward them only a forgiving spirit? And how can we be strifeful, if we have a merciful, a forgiving spirit ready to forgive trespasses against us, as we hope for forgiveness of our trespasses against the divine law?

"Mercy rejoiceth against justice," the Apostle explains. (Jas. 2:13.) Divine Mercy satisfied divine Justice, and thus prepared the way for the rescue of our race from the sentence of Justice: and so those who have become partakers of the divine spirit, and in whom it has reached a reasonable development, will permit their mercy to triumph over their conceptions of justice (for they have no law of justice over their fellows which needs to be satisfied).

While justice may not be blind in the Lord's people, while they may discern the faults of others most clearly, and while they may seek to let justice rule in respect to all of their own words, and thoughts, and actions, nevertheless they are to let mercy triumph in their hearts over justice as respects those who trespass against them, and they are not to hold resentments against those who have done them injury, nor to seek to avenge themselves and to inflict justice upon their opponents. Rather, they are to say, It is for God to be just: it is for me, who am a transgressor also against perfect justice, through the weaknesses which I have inherited, to have compassion upon my fellow-creature, who has inherited similar yet different weaknesses: it is for me to exercise accordingly the divine command, the blessed characteristic of mercy, compassion, forgiveness. And those who do so not only get rid of the evil works and sentiments of the world, the flesh and the devil, but increasingly become filled more and more with the spirit of love and gentleness and patient submission to the divine will, and thus the merciful are blessed even in the present time.

"Without Holiness No Man Shall See the Lord."

The sixth step of blessedness is Purity of Heart, —purity of motive, purity of intention, purity of effort, purity of will: purity, in the sense of sincerity, of transparency, of truthfulness. In other words, Blessed are the honest-hearted, those who have absolutely right intentions. True, there are worldly people who to some extent might claim honesty of heart, purpose, intention, but until they have come along the way of divine appointment in Christ, until they have become his followers through faith and consecration to him, and until they have taken the preceding steps of blessedness, we could not recognize them as being of the class here specified.

Many have misunderstood this statement, "pure in heart," and have thought of it as signifying absolute perfection—not only outward but inward; not only of words and of deeds, but also of thoughts. This view of the matter has tended to discourage some who honestly said to themselves, I am not perfect in deed nor in word nor in thought: how then can I claim to be blessed under this provision as one of the pure in heart? We answer that this is a misconception. The Lord knows as well and better than we do, that in our flesh dwells no perfection; that by reason of the fall all of Adam's children have their teeth set on edge by the sour grape of sin, so that sometimes we cannot do the things that we would do, and through ignorance we no doubt frequently leave undone the things which we ought to do.—Jer. 31:29, 30; Rom. 7:16-18.

The Lord taught a great lesson during the Jewish age by the giving of the Law to that people, with a promise of life attached to it, but the Apostle assures us that God foreknew, even when he gave that Law to the Israelites, that "by the deeds of the Law should no flesh be justified in his sight"—that on the contrary the clearer the Law would be discerned the more clear would be the knowledge of sin—of imperfection. God's provision in Christ is that he will forgive those imperfections which are due, not to personal wilfulness, but to the original sin, and the weaknesses and imperfections which have resulted from it—he will extend his mercy toward us as respects those deflections which are not wilful. That our Lord Jesus was not ignoring human imperfection is evident from the statement he makes in reference to the fifth of these blessed characteristics, viz., that the merciful "shall obtain mercy"—an implication of our need of mercy. Having assured us that we may obtain mercy, he is not in this sixth Beatitude declaring that we must be absolutely perfect in thought, word and deed; for if we were so, or could attain to such a condition, it would be wholly unnecessary for God to provide us mercy and forgiveness of sins through Christ's sacrifice.

The thought of "pure in heart" is not perfection of conduct nor of word, nor of thought, but perfection of intention as respects all of these. Our desire and effort must be for perfection—in thought, word and deed. The standard before us, to which our hearts, our wills, must give assent, is the divine standard, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) God has set no lower standard than this absolute perfection, but he has provided for us grace, mercy and peace through Christ, if we will walk in his footsteps,—this purity of heart being one of the essential steps in the narrow way.

Only the pure in heart have the promise of seeing God. They continue faithfully to the end of the pilgrimage, not only attaining the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ in the present life, (Rom. 8:29) in their purity of heart, purity of intention, sincerity of their efforts toward God and men, but eventually according to the Lord's promise, they shall, by the power of the first resurrection, be changed from earthly to heavenly, spiritual conditions. Then, as the Apostle declares, "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." And when we have thus become changed to be like the glorious Son of God, who is "the express image of the Father's person," we shall be able also unquestionably to see the Heavenly Father himself, and shall be introduced to him by our dear Redeemer—"complete in him," "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—1 John 3:2; Heb. 1:3; Eph. 5:27; Col. 2:10.

In this, as in the other blessings, a portion, a foretaste, comes in the present life. There is such a thing as having the eyes of our understanding opened, that we may be enabled to "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ." (Eph. 3:18.) But not all have this opening of the mental eye; not all are privileged to see the glories of Jehovah's character in symmetrical harmony, divine justice, wisdom, love and power coordinated and cooperating in unison for the blessing of every creature, according to the purpose which God purposed in himself before the world was.

But who may enjoy this blessing, this clearer vision, and who may, by seeing it, be enabled more and more to grow in likeness of that glorious perfection? Only "the pure in heart," only the sincere, the honest-hearted. Those who have a double mind, a double will, are Scripturally said to have a double vision, a double eye. They see spiritual things cross-eyed, see things double, and proportionately indistinctly. Many of God's people have failed thus far to grow up into Christ in all things, see thus doubly and confusedly—they see something of the heavenly things, and something of the earthly; they see but dimly and indistinctly the lines of the divine character, and proportionately they lack ability to copy it. Let all who have named the name of Christ seek more and more to have but the one Master, and an eye single to his glory and service—a pure, a sincere, a faithful heart.

The Sons of God All Peacemakers.

The seventh Beatitude is an outward manifestation of the sixth. The purity of heart toward God, which others cannot discern, will manifest itself in this seventh characteristic of blessedness and growth—namely, in peaceable desires and efforts to promote peace in others. For beyond question no one will be a peacemaker from this divine standpoint unless he have already become sincere, pure in heart toward God; and unless he have also the preceding developments of grace in his heart: (1) humility, (2) sympathy, (3) patient submission, (4) hunger and thirst for righteousness (which includes trust), (5) a love or mercifulness toward others, (6) sincerity of heart. And one who has developed these characteristics to any particular degree can surely be nothing else than peaceably disposed himself, and a peacemaker with others.

Very evidently but a small number of the Lord's people have progressed so far as to have this grace markedly developed and exemplified in their lives. The great majority, even of those who have named the name of Christ, seem to pursue a reverse course, which indicates that even if their hearts are pure and their sympathies large, they have still much to learn in the school of Christ; for instead of being peace promoters they are strife promoters. Yet this is not of evil intent, but rather of habit, and of ignorance and of failure to discern the wide difference between the divine course of love, and the opposite course of selfishness which prevails in the world. Strife-making is chiefly stirred up with the tongue, though it may be aroused by a gesture or by a glance. Likewise, peacemaking is chiefly done with the tongue, though it also may operate through the eye. How many Christian people we all know who have tongues which are continually stirring up strife! The Adversary controls many in this manner long after they have escaped from his control in many other respects; and this is largely because they do not detect that in this they are doing Satan service—do not even detect that they are stirrers up of strife, hatred, envy, malice, and planters of roots of bitterness by which many are defiled.

When will Christians learn the length and breadth and depth of the injunctions "Speak evil of no man," and "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying?" (Titus 3:2; Eph. 4:29.) How long will it take some of God's true children to learn that in uttering an evil thing (even if they were positive of its truth), they may be doing a world of evil? How long will it take them to learn that it is not always necessary to speak the truth, nor ever proper to do so except when it would be for the edifying of others? How many lessons, line upon line, must they have to convince them that they are not only to avoid gossip about other people's business, and fault-finding, and cynicism, but that all these are evidences of their deficiency in love—of their deficiency in the likeness of Christ, and their lack of the qualities of the peacemaker; and that these lacks need to be striven against earnestly. . . .

Oh, that all would learn by heart, and continually seek to exemplify in life, the words of the Apostle, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Those who are thinking on the true and lovely and good and beautiful things will speak to each other of the same; hence the importance of having our hearts filled with good things, in order that out of the abundance of the good things of our hearts our mouths may speak continually good things, that the Lord would approve, and that would minister blessing to those who hear.—Phil. 4:8; Luke 6:45.

Such have a very precious promise, well worthy of their efforts—"They shall be called the children of God"—they have God's spirit, the likeness of his dear Son has been traced in their hearts; they have been sanctified with the truth; they shall ultimately be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Only such at heart will the Lord ever recognize as his sons and joint-heirs with his great Son, our Lord, in the Kingdom. Moreover, this is a test which we may well recognize for ourselves particularly, and to some extent for each other, as evidencing the degree of our growth as children of God—our peaceable dispositions, and our carefulness to pursue such a course in life as will tend toward peace.

Some of the Lord's people find in themselves naturally considerable of a spirit of combativeness, unfavorable to peace. Indeed, it requires something of the spirit of combativeness to fight a good fight against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, and to "contend earnestly for the faith;" so that those who have combativeness naturally find themselves in antagonism with others along some line continually. However, they should not be discouraged by this, but should remember that combativeness is a valuable servant and soldier, if turned and exercised in the right direction. Its exercise toward fellow creatures must be modified by mercy, by a realization of our own imperfections and the imperfections of all. Combativeness must be trained to fight along the lines of love and mercy—to fight for the truth and for all the servants and agencies of the truth, and against the error,—but not against the blinded and ignorant servants of the error. Combativeness must be given plenty to do in fighting against the imperfections and weaknesses of our own natures, and being thus busily engaged in this good work, it will find comparatively little time for assaulting others; and realizing the difficulties connected with the conquering of self it will have the greater compassion for the weaknesses of others.

Attaining Great Reward in Heaven.

The blessing that comes through persecution is the eighth Beatitude. It is not until the Lord's people have experienced some of these preceding blessings of His grace that they reach the point where they can "glory in tribulations also," as did the Apostle Paul. But our Lord carefully distinguishes as between different kinds of persecution, marking out the blessed kind as distinct from all other sorts. We are not to invite persecution by fault-finding and general cantankerousness and combative opposition to everybody and everything; nor are we to invite persecution by fanaticism. Rather, we are to cultivate the "spirit of a sound mind," and to learn gradually what the sound mind of the Lord is, as revealed in the Scriptures. Even then, no doubt we will be falsely accused by the world of "fanaticism," because the wisdom of God is oft esteemed foolishness with men, as often the wisdom of men is foolishness from the divine standpoint.

Whenever a course of action would appear to be fanatical and unreasonable, we are to hesitate to do it until we have first made sure that we find the same spirit, teaching and example in our Lord and in the apostles; then we may safely follow, regardless of what the world may say or think respecting our course. For instance, from the divine standpoint it is insanity for a man to labor day and night to amass millions, for his children to fight over at his death; but from the human standpoint this is the reasonable course. From the divine standpoint it was wise for the apostles to spend their lives in the service of the truth, sacrificing earthly interests and prospects, name and fame, to obtain eventually a better resurrection, and eternal glory, honor and immortality; but this, from the world's standpoint was foolishness, fanaticism.

If persecution come to us as a result of our following the Lord, and the apostles,—their teachings and example, and if it is because of our faithfulness to the vows of consecration to His service that all manner of evil is said against us, falsely, then indeed we may rejoice; for so were the prophets persecuted, so was our Lord persecuted, so were the apostles and all the faithful ones since persecuted. Being thus in good company in our experiences, it becomes a witness or testimony to us that we shall be in like good company in that day when the Lord shall make up his Jewels.

All who have such experiences may well rejoice, and if, as the Lord's words intimate, the more of such experiences we have the more will be our reward in heaven, then the more we may rejoice in these experiences. And if we be without any such experiences it behooves us to look well to ourselves, lest peradventure it mean that we are not faithfully walking in the "narrow way" of self-sacrifice,—or are not doing with our might what our hands find to do, but are holding back our sacrifice. Should such be the reflection of any let him not be discouraged, but, in the language of the Prophet, let him "bind the sacrifice to the altar," with fresh cords of love and of zeal, praying the Lord to accept the sacrifice, and to furnish opportunities for being and doing and suffering for His cause, and for the Lord's and the truth's sake.—Psa. 118:27.

The prismatic sum of all these graces is—Love; and those who have them are loveable and shall by and by be made gloriously lovely, with and like him who is "altogether lovely." Our call is to attain these blessed conditions in the Kingdom. —Z. '00:67-73.

A Peculiar Marriage

Genesis 24: 58-67.

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."—Proverbs 3:6.

WHEN ABRAHAM was 140 years old and his wife Sarah had been dead three years, his son Isaac was forty years old. This heir of the most wonderful of the Divine promises did not go to seek a wife for himself, probably because too bashful. Then Abraham called Eliezer, the steward of his household, and directed that he take ten camels and go a distance of about 500 miles to the vicinity in which Abraham was born, and where his brother Nahor and family still lived. Eliezer went under the general direction that he should find a wife suitable for Isaac and bring her to him.

The entire story is told with a beautiful simplicity quite convincing to the unprejudiced. The characters described by the historian were not savages, much less cousins of monkeys, as evolutionists would have us think. And the story itself is peculiar enough in its setting to assure us of its truth. A fabricator of such a narrative will scarcely picture his hero as obtaining a wife under the circumstances here set forth, nor was this the custom of that time nor of any time, nor of any people, so far as we have knowledge. The procedure was in every way unique.

Only recently have Bible Students learned why the matter was so arranged. It was evidently to illustrate to us a great spiritual design, which has been more than eighteen centuries in process of accomplishment. The type fits to its antitype in a manner not to be misunderstood.

Abraham typified the Heavenly Father, Isaac typified the Lord Jesus (his forty years typified in due time), and Eliezer typified the Holy Spirit. In due time, the Father sent the Holy Spirit to gather the Elect Company which will constitute the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. As in the type Abraham did not take a wife for his son from amongst the heathen, so in the antitype God did not select the Bride of Christ from the heathen. As Eliezer went to those who were related to Abraham, and believers in God, so the Holy Spirit was sent only to believers, to select from them the Bride class.

The Bride Class Originally Jewish

The Jews were in fellowship with God under their Law Covenant, and to them only the Holy Spirit originally went. Later, in God's providence, the door was opened to the Gentiles. This was not in the sense of accepting all Gentiles to the Bride class, but merely of permitting them to hear the Gospel, in order that such as heard and responded might as believers draw nigh to God, and be permitted to join the Bride class when they fully consecrated themselves to God—the antitypical Rebecca enduring the trials and perils of the journey to the antitypical Isaac. From this standpoint, today's Study is not only beautiful and interesting, but highly instructive.

Rebecca at the Well

Abraham's servant, loyal to his commission, faithful both to the father and to the son, sought earnestly the proper person of Abraham's desire, assured that Isaac, the heir of such precious promises, should have a suitable companion and helpmate. When he came to the place appointed, the city of Abraham's brother, Nahor, he was alert. He found Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel, the granddaughter of Nahor, at the well, caring for the sheep. This is interpreted to signify that those approached by the Holy Spirit with the suggestion of becoming joint-heirs with Christ are usually found in some way connected with the service of God's sheep—God's people—giving them water from the well, which symbolically would mean giving refreshment from the Bible and its words of life—"water of life."

The first test put to the maiden was in respect to her willingness to give of the water. Eliezer asked for a drink. Rebecca replied, "Drink, and I will give thy camels to drink also." Here was manifested the spirit of generosity—of service—just as the Holy Spirit indicates that those who constitute the Bride of Christ must have meekness and humility as primary qualifications for acceptance with the Lord to the high calling.

Immediately Eliezer hastened to put upon Rebecca some jewels, symbolic of spiritual blessings, which come to those who first hearken to the Spirit of the Lord and show a willingness and humility. Eliezer was received into the home. The friends of Rebecca received the blessings of the spirit which she had received; and they all, representing the Household of Faith, rejoiced with her.

Eliezer promptly made known his business. He was there on a special mission, and this he set forth. He explained that Abraham was very rich, and that he had made Isaac heir of all that he had, and had sent him, his servant, to find a suitable bride for Isaac. Under the guidance of Divine providence, he had met Rebecca and believed her to be the Lord's choice for his Master's son. The question now was, Would she accept the offer, or would she reject it, and should he seek another? The question was put to Rebecca herself: Would she go into a far country under the guidance of Eliezer, and become the wife of Isaac? Her prompt answer was, "I will go."

All this well represents the question which comes before those called to be of the Bride of Christ. They hear that He is "the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." They hear that He is Lord of all, the Inheritor of the "exceeding great and precious promises." They learn that union with Him will mean the pleasures of His fellowship forevermore and participation with Him in all His great and wonderful future. Such as are rightly exercised answer, "I will go," as Rebecca did, with great promptness.

It meant something to Rebecca to leave her father's house, her own people, her own country with which she was familiar; and so it means considerable for all those who accept the Father's call through the Holy Spirit and become members of the Bride of Christ. The Prophet addresses these, saying: "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him."

Only a whole-hearted love for the Lord and a well-grounded faith in the "exceeding great and precious promises" will carry us through to the end of the journey, joyful in anticipation to be finally accepted into glory with our Beloved, the King of Glory. We are to remember that during this Gospel Age millions have heard of the Message of the Holy Spirit, inviting to membership in the Bride class; but not all have promptly said, "Yes, I will go." Rebecca types only the successful ones, who will finally make their calling and election sure, and become members of the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

More Jewels for Rebecca

Another part of the record tells us that, when Rebecca decided to accept the offer of marriage with Isaac, Eliezer opened his treasures and gave her still further jewels of adornment. How beautiful a figure! The Bride class receive an early blessing of the Holy Spirit, and a later one. The latter comes to those who have made a full decision to be the Lord's at any and every cost—"to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." The graces of the Holy Spirit come more and more to them. As the Apostle suggests, we add to our faith fortitude, knowledge, patience, experience, hope, joy, love. And each of these jewels of character, in proportion as we put them on, enhances our beauty of character.

Up hill and down, through sunshine and shadow, the camels finally brought Rebecca to her journey's end. So with the antitypical Rebecca. They start in the pathway of obedience and self-denial, leaving their father Adam's house. After they accept the Holy Spirit's suggestions and decide to go to Christ, they begin promptly to take up their cross and follow Him. Through sunshine and shade—trials and difficulties of the journey—they travel down through the centuries of this Gospel Age.

As Eliezer brought Rebecca and her maids safe to the end of their journey to the presence of Isaac at Lahai-roi, so the Holy Spirit will guide the Church to the end of the journey to the presence, **parousia,** of Christ. The camels which bore the treasures and jewels to Rebecca's home, and which afterward brought her and her maidens and Eliezer back to Isaac's home, would seemingly represent well the Holy Scriptures, by which the faithful are borne along—the agencies sent by the Father and the Son for the comfort and assistance of the prospective Bride on her journey.

As Eliezer met Rebecca at the well and handled the water, symbolical of Truth, so on the return journey Rebecca met Isaac at the well Lahai-roi.

Following the custom of the time, she put on a veil and alighted from the camel to meet Isaac. So the Scriptures tell us that the Church must pass beyond the Veil before she will be fully received by the antitypical Isaac into all the holy associations foretold.

Rebecca's maidens doubtless typified the blessings of the consecrated class, now following with the Bride class, but not living up to their full privileges and opportunities. The blessing pronounced upon Rebecca, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions," represents the future of the Church; for as the Redeemer will, during His Messianic Kingdom, become the Father or Life-giver to thousands of millions of Adam's race, bought with His precious blood, so the Church, His Bride, will become the mother of those same thousands of millions of humanity, in the sense that she will be their caretaker and supervisor, to assist them forward to full perfection.—Z. '13:59, 60.

"Unthankful, Unholy"

Luke 17:11-19.

"Be ye thankful."—Col. 3:15.

LEPROSY is a very prevalent disease in eastern lands, and amongst the Jews lepers were specially proscribed—separated from others—not allowed to have intercourse with their own families nor to come near anybody, but obliged to keep at a distance, and on the approach of a stranger to cry out, "Unclean! unclean!" From the standpoint of the Law it is evident that leprosy was meant to represent sin and its loathsome, contagious and consuming character.

A traveler in the Orient writes: "As our traveling party passed out the western gate of Nablus, the site of ancient Sechem, a group of repulsive lepers greeted us with calls for help. They showed various forms of that terrible disease: the nose or the lips or a hand or a foot eaten away; the limbs distorted, and one case at least was a leper 'white as snow.' When we were fairly in our tents beyond the city westward, those lepers came, fifteen in all, and seated themselves afar off, in a semi-circle, facing our tents, with one of their number a little in advance of the others, holding out a dish for alms, and, as with one voice, they cried aloud to us to have pity on them and give them aid." Another writer describes leprous conditions thus: "The hair falls from the head and eyebrows; the nails loosen, decay and drop off; joint after joint of the fingers and toes shrink up and slowly fall away; the gums are absorbed and the teeth disappear; the nose, the eyes, the tongue and the palate are slowly consumed."

The horrors and loathsomeness of leprosy and its contaminating qualities, both by heredity and infection, well illustrate the disease of sin, which has taken hold of the entire human family, and which separates and alienates from God and all that are pure and in harmony with him. The isolation of lepers was distinctly enjoined in the Law, but no cure or remedy was prescribed. The disease was treated from a religious standpoint, and in every case made amenable to the judgment of the priests: they decided whether or not a case of leprosy had developed, they banished the leper, and in the event of anything occurring to cure him, the priests must pass upon his cleansing before he would be readmitted to society. So, in the great malady of sin, God commits to the hands of the antitypical priesthood—Christ and the faithful under-priests now being selected from the world—the work of pronouncing and making manifest what is sin, as distinct and separate from what is righteousness, and thus to separate between the clean and the unclean, between those who are in harmony with God, and those who are out of harmony with him. And in the coming age, when the Royal Priesthood shall be glorified and in official power to bless the world with the knowledge of God and the knowledge of how to become free from sin and, through the merit of the precious blood, to attain to full restitution,—to purity and perfection of mind and heart and body,—it will be this Royal Priesthood that will have the deciding of when the purification has been complete—when sin has ceased to exist in the condemned, and they have been brought back into full harmony with God and righteousness.

Travelers tell us that in the locality mentioned in our lesson—the borders of Samaria and Galilee—leprosy still abounds rather more than elsewhere; and that groups somewhat like the one described in our lesson, are frequently to be seen. This group stood afar off, as they were compelled by law to do; yet recognizing Jesus as the great Teacher, of whose miracles they had heard something, they conceived the hope that he might have compassion upon them and heal them of their loathsome disease. Therefore they lifted up their voices together, crying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." There is no doubt as to the meaning of their cry; although they usually begged for money, they evidently now were seeking for healing from the great Physician.

Hearing their voices Jesus turned compassionately toward them, and we can better imagine than describe the sympathy which he felt for them in their pitiable condition, and no doubt also his mind at the same time took in the thought of the great malady of sin, from which the whole world was suffering, and whose sufferings he had come to relieve, whose bonds he had come to break, by giving his own life a ransom price for theirs. Our Lord merely said to them, "Go show yourselves to the priests." This implied that the leprosy had ceased its ravages, and that they might expect to be pronounced free from contagion and permitted to return to their homes and families, even though the maiming and marring occasioned by the ravages of the disease would still be with them. Thankful for such a release from their sufferings, the entire ten obediently hastened to comply with the injunction, but in the way they discovered that the blessing they had received from the Lord was not merely a staying of the disease, but a restoration to normal conditions. Their faith had brought them far more than they had expected.

One of them turned back and prostrating himself before the Lord rendered homage and thanks to his deliverer. The other nine passed on to comply with our Lord's words, and to show themselves to the priests, not having a sufficiency of love, appreciation and thankfulness to return in their cleansed condition to, first of all, acknowledge the giver of the blessing they had received. Our Lord remarked this, and called attention also to the fact that the one who did return was a Samaritan, and not one of the Jewish household of faith: saying, "Were there none found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger?" And he said unto him, Arise, and go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." . . .

Thankfulness of heart is a very sure sign of the character God is seeking,—especially in matters pertaining to our great salvation. And we find parallels to this illustration all about us. We find those who have suffered from the leprosy of sin, and who have appealed to Jesus for mercy and help, and who have been justified by faith—cleansed from their iniquities, covered with the righteousness of Christ: and yet amongst all these who have experienced such blessings and favors at our Lord's hands **how few,** comparatively, there are who return to him and prostrate themselves before him, to offer thanks for release from the bondage of sin and condemnation, and lay themselves at his feet, living sacrifices. Only the truly thankful are constrained thus to do, —only the truly appreciative. As the Apostle declares of himself and all such, it is true that "The love of Christ constraineth [draweth, impelleth] us: for we thus judge that if one died for all then were all dead [yea, worse than dead in trespasses and sins and condemnation], and that we who live [justified to life through faith in his blood] should not henceforth live unto ourselves but unto him who died for us."—2 Cor. 5:14. . . .

Thankfulness will make every trial and sacrifice on our part seem small, and proportionately easy to be offered, and it will make all of God's mercies and favors toward us proportionately grand and great and inspiring.—Z. '00: 330-332.

◆

The Church will always be in covenant relationship with the Father. The fact that He calls them **sons** implies that they are bound to Him. (John 1:12.) Every father is in covenant relationship with his children, and they with him. Every child has a responsibility to its father, and the father to the Child. The fact that God has received the Lord Jesus and the Church as sons (Heb. 3:6) signifies that they are in covenant relationship with Him. St. Paul says, "We are the children of God: and if children then heirs." (Rom. 8:16, 17.) His statement not only **implies** that relationship, but proves it; for the sons have a right to the things which the Father has provided for his children.—Z. '13: 20, 21.

How St. Peter was Punished for Denying His Lord

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?"—John 21:15-17.

THE CONTEXT SHOWS that these words were addressed by the Redeemer to St. Peter on the occasion of His third manifestation to his Disciples after His resurrection. This was presumably three or four weeks after the Master's resurrection from the dead. His manifestations to the women on the morning of His resurrection and His later manifestation to the two as they went to Emmaus are evidently not counted, but the manifestation the same evening in the upper room, when all the disciples except Thomas and Judas were present, is counted the first. And the manifestation a week later, Thomas being present, is counted the second.

The delay in giving this third manifestation was evidently for the purpose of testing the faith of the Apostles and of leading them to reach a conclusion respecting their future course, which Jesus wished to correct. So far as we can understand the record at least two Sundays passed without any further manifestation of Jesus to His disciples, and then, giving up hope, they decided to return to the fishing business and did so. The journey to Galilee and the resumption of business presumably took another week.

During all those thirty days the mental attitude of all the Apostles and the other disciples can be better imagined than described. They were perplexed, they had indeed had evidences of the Master's resurrection; they had had the Scriptures called to their attention which proved that this was necessary and that God had previously so arranged. They had hoped for further conferences with Jesus and that He would have told them definitely what to do.

Instead, left to themselves, the disciples were thoroughly disheartened. They had left all to follow Him, to tell the people that He was the Son of God, the long-promised Messiah, and that He would soon set up His Kingdom, which would bring blessings, primarily to Israel and, secondarily, through Israel, to all the families of the earth in harmony with the Abrahamic Covenant. Now apparently all of these hopes were dashed, frustrated. How foolish they thought it would seem for them to try to convince the people that a man, crucified as a malefactor, as a blasphemer, was indeed the Messiah! How foolish it would seem to tell of His resurrection! They felt that they could do nothing else than abandon the ministry as a lost cause; and the resumption of the fishing business was the logical conclusion.

They Toiled All the Night

Their first night was a discouraging one—they caught nothing. It looked indeed as though God was punishing them for the course they had taken in becoming disciples of Jesus—that everything was going wrong. But not so; they were merely being taught needed lessons.

In the morning they beheld a stranger on the shore who beckoned and shouted to know if they had any fish for sale. They replied, No, they had made no catch. The stranger suggested casting the net on the other side of the boat. And, although the suggestion seemed a foolish one, having been so unsuccessful, yet they did so, and immediately the net was filled with fishes! It did not require long for them to learn the lesson. They knew instinctively that the unknown stranger upon the shore was none other than their Master. They remembered a very similar experience at the time they were first called to leave their nets and to become fishers of men.

All interest had just centered in the fishing business, but now boats and fish and nets all lost their value in the estimation of these fishermen. Here was their risen Lord, for whose third appearance they had been waiting now nearly three weeks. Fearing that the Master would disappear, even before he could get to him, St. Peter plunged into the sea and swam ashore. To his surprise the stranger already had fish and had them cooked, and all were invited to join in the breakfast on the shore of Galilee.

The stranger had not the clothing by which they had known their Lord, neither did He have the marks of the nails in His hands and feet, that they might thus identify Him. This was a different manifestation. They knew Him as did those with whom He walked to Emmaus, who recognized Him in the blessing of the bread, and not by His features or clothing or wounds. They recognized that none other than He could have performed such a miracle. They did not ask who He was; they felt a restraint; as we read, "None of them durst ask who He was," but all knew that He was the Lord.

"Lovest Thou Me More?"

The stranger addressed St. Peter particularly, saying, "Lovest thou Me more than these"—these boats and nets, etc., pertaining to the fishing business? St. Peter answered, "Lord, Thou knowest that I affectionately love Thee." He used a word expressing fondness of love. Jesus replied, "Feed My lambs."

Then came the question a second time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" A great pressure was felt by St. Peter. Why did the Master so particularly question his love? Why should He put this question more to him than to the others? Was it because he had been the first of the disciples to suggest the resumption of the fishing business? Was he to blame for this? But he answered, "Lord, Thou knowest that I affectionately love Thee." Jesus this time replied, "Tend My sheep." For the third time Jesus said to St. Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, dost thou affectionately love Me?" Here Jesus used the same word that St. Peter had used, as thought He questioned the affection and depth of St. Peter's love. Ah! the third time must have sent the memory of St. Peter back to the scene in

Caiaphas' Judgment Hall, when he denied his Master the third time, even with cursing. And now Jesus for the third time had asked him respecting his love and whether it was really a love of affection! St. Peter's choking reply was, "Lord, Thou knowest all things! Thou **knowest** that I affectionately love Thee!" The Lord's reply was, "Feed My sheep."

In harmony with these words of the Master to St. Peter the chief work of His followers has been to minister to the needs of the spirit-begotten **sheep.** It is in full harmony with this that St. Paul, addressing the Elders of Ephesus, counseled that they "feed the **flock of God,** which he had purchased with the blood of His own Son." There is a point here that perhaps is too frequently overlooked. If all of the Lord's followers could realize that the message to St. Peter is the same as comes to all of us, perhaps it would make a change in most of our preaching.

Mistaken Methods

Have not Christians in general overlooked this important lesson, namely, that the chief work of the ministers and under-shepherds of the Lord's flock during this Age is to **"feed the flock"**? Is it not true that comparatively **little** feeding is being done? On the contrary, the thought usually received by new converts is, Now you are saved; go, evangelize, and bring others to Christ—especially bring money, for with plenty of it we can convert the world. Work for Jesus by soliciting funds for church expenses, extension, etc., etc.

If the inquirer has thoughts or feelings is it not too often the case that his instructors know not how to answer them, but merely say, "Stop thinking, and go to work"? Alas, that this is so true! . . . The **sheep** should be **tended,** cared for, guided, instructed, and the sheep should also be **fed** with the strong meat.

Another Lesson We May Learn

We must not leave the text without calling to memory a most wonderfully instructive lesson concerning the proper way to reprove and rebuke our brethren when the same is surely necessary. So far as the record shows, the three inquiries which our Lord made of St. Peter respecting his love for Him were the only rebukes ever given him as an offset, or punishment for his shameful denial of the Master on the night in which He was betrayed.

Had many of us been in the Master's place we would have felt that it was necessary to make St. Peter very humbly apologize before we would have anything further to do with him. We would have been inclined to speak of his weakness, of his ingratitude, of how he knew better, etc., etc. Our sense of justice would, in many instances, have entirely overshadowed our sense of mercy and sympathy. But not so with the Master. He knew the loyalty of St. Peter's heart. He knew that he had already gone out and wept bitterly over the matter. He knew what a sense of shame would be upon him and how much courage it would mean for him to think at all of meeting the Master whom he had denied.

Surely it was on account of this sympathy for St. Peter and this appreciation of the tendency he would have to become entirely discouraged that led our Lord to mention St. Peter first amongst the Apostles on the morning of His resurrection, saying to Mary, to whom He first appeared, "Go and tell My disciples, and Peter"—don't let Peter think that he is an outcast. Let him know that I think of him and love him and sympathize with him and have forgiven him, because I know he did it under stress.

We Should Copy the Master's Methods

And if our Lord and Master has set us such an example of benevolence and forgiveness without request, how are we learning this lesson? To what extent do we forgive others their trespasses and to what extent do we go more than half way to let them know that we harbor no resentful feelings toward them? And when the appropriate time comes and it is proper for something to be said can we not take a lesson from the Redeemer's loving forbearance and gentleness in His merely asking the erring one if he had a proper kind of love, and when he confesses special love, then to ask him if he is **sure** that he has the **special love?**

No doubt our success as the Master's servants in feeding the brethren, the flock, and helping instead of hindering them, will be in proportion as we remember and copy His style and methods. So, then, while feeding His flock, let us have continually before us the great Shepherd's example of how the flock should be dealt with.—Z. '12: 207-209.

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Let us never forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into his marvelous light. And if thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the worldly spirit, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us.—Z. '03:164.

Every man and woman favored by the Lord with some knowledge of present truth should at once appreciate the true situation;—that the most talented and best educated have nothing worthy a place on the Lord's altar,—nothing worthy of acceptance in the Lord's service; and forthwith, each should proceed to devote to it, daily and hourly, the **best** that he has and the **most** that he can, as being the greatest privilege that could ever be offered to angels or men—to be colaborers with God.—Z. '03: 52, 53.

"I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.—

John 14:3.

What joyful hopes, what exuberant anticipations, cluster around this promise, in the hearts of the Lord's faithful! In a few words it sums up all the good things that God hath in reservation for them that love him. But not all mankind have such feelings in respect to this subject:—not all are aware of the gracious blessings held in store for the world, awaiting that auspicious time for their dissemination; and not all mankind are in such a condition of mind and heart as to be able, with joy, to anticipate meeting the Lord. We can readily surmise that not only a large proportion of nominal Christendom, but a comparatively **large proportion of true Christians,** are not living in that attitude of heart and daily life which would permit them to anticipate this meeting with sentiments of pleasure.—Z. '03:147.

◆

The spirit of meekness is very essential to all of us. We need to realize that of ourselves we know nothing, that our own judgment and reasoning are not to be depended upon, that we must be continually looking to the Lord for the help which cometh from him alone.—Z. '06:168.

◆

We need the instruction and guidance and inspiration of the truth for holy living; and our Lord's words imply that all the truth that is necessary to this end is in the Word of God.—Z. '93:148.

◆

There is this great position—glory, honor and immortality! The result lies in my own hands! There is not another person in the universe responsible for my success or failure but **myself!** I must gain that great prize! The Lord will not gain it for me. He will merely assist me in the performing of this great Covenant.

So it is very proper for us to have **this fear,** a realization of the fact that we are each making history for eternity. We are to be either on the great plane of glory, the Divine nature; or we may go into the Second Death, and lose everything, from which there will be no recovery.

As we realize these facts, it is no wonder that we tremble and fear, and feel our need of walking, as the Apostle says **circumspectly,** and of weighing our thoughts, so as to be in conformity to the will of God in Christ. This is indeed a condition that might be called **fear and trembling.** It is a condition of great earnestness. There is no room for foolishness here, or lightness, or frivolity. God is testing every power we possess to see whether we know what we have said in our consecration vow, to prove whether we were sincere and meant it all, to prove whether to any extent we overstated ourselves and did not **mean** entire devotion to Him. —Z. '13:265.

◆

We spoke of the oneness of the Church, the body of Christ and the terms of our relationship to our Head; and saw that in **no sense** are we gathered to men or organizations, but to the Lord himself. "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Z. '03:195.

◆

The Lord always has raised up, and will **to the end** raise up, helps for the edification of the body of Christ.—Z. '93:358.

◆

When in derision the soldiers placed upon the head of our Lord a crown of thorns, and arrayed him in a purple robe, and led Him into the judgment hall, Pilate looked upon Him in admiration, and exclaimed, "Behold the Man!" or (see Strong's Concordance) "Behold the countenance!" I am a Gentile and not of your race, but here you have sent to me for sentence the most glorious Jew on earth! None can have a really beautiful character without the inner beauty being reflected in the face. If a man be a vicious character, he cannot hide it from his features. If he be of a loving disposition, it will show in his face. What, then, shall we think of our Lord! His face must have been one of marvelous beauty! No wonder the people flocked to see Him because of His graciousness of speech and His wonderful beauty—the image of God!—Z. '13:244.

◆

The Ancient Worthies lived prior to the time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, therefore, if they receive any measure of this blessing to come upon "all flesh," it must be in the future, and the giving of the Holy Spirit to them will have much to do with fixing, establishing, crystallizing their already perfect characters. They will be brought to greater knowledge, and having already endured severe testings and having proved their thorough heart-loyalty, they will have to learn only how to use their talents and powers in fullest conformity to the Divine will. —Z. '12:244.

◆

Let us remember that the armor is not a useless **weight,** but a necessary **protection in battle.**—Rom. 13:12; Eph. 6:13; Z. '12:288.

◆

It would appear as if we are living in the time of special testing so clearly foretold by the Lord. Everything hidden would be uncovered. He said. He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness. (1 Cor. 4:5.) If we would not be put to shame before Him, we must be **honest.**—Z. '13:5.

◆

Naturally, the "Watchers" are on the lookout for every sign of the times seeming to harmonize with the known coming events. Indeed, our interest in the "news of the day" is chiefly with the fragments which seem to have a connection with or a bearing upon the fulfilments of prophecy.—Z. '14:261.

◆

We are to be comforters at this particular time of "them that mourn in Zion." This is a work that the saints of today, who have been enlightened and blessed by the Message of Present Truth, are eminently qualified to do.—Z. '14:279.

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Old Corn Gems

NUMBER FORTY-SIX

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Much Advantage Every Way Is Ours

WHEREIN shall we say, is there an advantage in being a Spiritual Israelite? . . . The advantages of this class are numerous, and lay hold upon the present life, as well as that which is to come. In the present time, it is the privilege of these to enjoy the peace of God, which passeth all human understanding. It is their privilege to know by faith that all things are working together for good to them because they love God. It is their privilege to realize that whatever may happen to others in the world, nothing can happen, so far as they are concerned. Their affairs and interests are all subject to a Divine supervision. No wonder they can have peace in every storm! No wonder they are able to rejoice even in tribulation!

Theirs is a joy of spirit, of which no earthly experience can rob them, and their joys increase daily, yearly, as they ripen in Christian experience, and as they grow in knowledge and in grace. Theirs is a privilege of access to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, and a privilege of communion with the Heavenly Father and with their Lord Jesus Christ. They may count themselves, as St. Peter declares, members of the Royal Priesthood, the Holy Nation of Israel, the Peculiar People of God. They may rejoice in the privilege of being God's ambassadors, and of telling the Good Tidings to others, thus to "show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light." Oh, great are the privileges and mercies and blessing of these Spiritual Israelites, far more than compensating for their disciplines, tribulations and oppositions!

Joys of the Life to Come

But beyond all these experiences of the present life lie the riches of God's grace for the future, which these possess and hold with the power of faith. As St. Paul declares, they have the "promise of the life which now is and also of that which is to come." And that life to come is such a wonderful life that the study of it is an endless matter. Every step of obedience brings them rights and privileges with God, brings them a step forward also in knowledge of Himself and of His glorious Plan. Thus the more saintly and self-sacrificing the character, the deeper may be his knowledge, the richer his experiences, the more precious his hopes and anticipations.

Are we asked, What are the anticipations of this class? The answer is, They anticipate the things which God has promised; they anticipate that as they are now children of God, so their promised resurrection from the dead to full spiritual perfection will make them sons of God on the highest plane. And if children, then they will be "heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, their Lord." Besides, these Spiritual Israelites are heirs of a Spiritual Canaan, a Spiritual Kingdom. To enter upon their Kingdom they must needs experience the powers of a better resurrection than others. And this will mean, the Apostle assures us, that they will "be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." Is it not true then, in the fullest and most absolute sense, that all things are working together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to His purpose.—Z. '13:154.

It is right that we should feel ourselves thoroughly determined to be loyal to the Lord's Cause to our very last breath; for such a determination is very necessary to victory. The mistake made by many is in not realizing how severe the trials and temptations may become—in not realizing the necessity of Heavenly assistance in our every time of need. The Apostle wrote, "When I am weak then am I strong." (2 Corinthians 12:10). By this he doubtless meant, when fully loyal to the Lord, I feel my own weakness and insufficiency, but I am strong because then I rely especially upon Heavenly aid—then I watch and pray, and am thus forewarned against the temptations.

Doubtless in the end of this Age—there will come Gethsemane experiences to the Church of Christ. Those who will stand those temptations and trials, and come off victorious, will be the ones whose faith and trust in the Lord are strong—those who watch and pray lest they enter into temptation, and who are thus safeguarded against it. As our Lord forewarned St. Peter and the other Apostles of their coming trial, so He has forewarned us of the great crucial test near at hand.—Z. '14:299.

In His Wisdom God has seen fit so to create us that our conduct of today has much to do with our character of tomorrow. Thus we are either making or breaking character continually.—Z. '15:245.

GENERAL CONVENTION

General Convention of STANDFAST BIBLE STUDENTS at Vancouver, B.C., Saturday, Sunday and Monday, January 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1921, in the Upper Dominion Hall, 339 Pender Street West. Two meals will be provided daily for all conventioners. Reception Committee will meet all boats and trains. For further information please write Brother George H. Biddle, 816 12th Avenue West, Vancouver, B.C. Phone number, Fairmont 3443.

Those who desire to symbolize their consecration, will be glad to hear that an Immersion Service has been arranged for on the evening preceding the convention, i.e., 7:30 p.m., December 31st, 1920.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FORTY-SIX

> *"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year."* Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

Things Lawful Not Expedient

1 Corinthians 10: 23-33.

Golden Text:—"It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth."—Romans 14:21.

OUR lesson relates to personal liberty. It is a fact that no other religious system teaches personal liberty in the sense and to the degree that it is taught in the Bible—by Jesus and his apostles. Even the Jews under the Law were taught a higher degree of personal liberty than were others in their day—by the Law itself. The essence of all human religion and philosophy seems to be the bondage of the individual to the customs, the usages, of his forefathers, bound by ignorance, superstition and priestcraft. It may be argued that amongst Christians, too, priestcraft, ignorance and superstition are quite prominent and weighty. We assent to this, but point out that such bondage is quite contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures. It is written, "Whom the Son makes free is free indeed" (John 8:36); and everywhere the teaching of the New Testament is that "Where the Spirit of Christ is there is liberty."—2 Cor. 3:17.

Mental Poise or Balance

If so great personal liberty is accorded under the Gospel, the question arises, Why should there be any difficulty along this line? We reply that the difficulty lies in the fact that the Lord's people, who are given this large liberty as New Creatures, find difficulties to its exercise in their own flesh—because of inherited weaknesses, mental and physical; and they find perplexities and difficulties also because of the general undone, fallen condition of humanity, and because human weaknesses take so many different forms, all of which need more or less restraint in some form or other. The difficulty is in knowing how to balance our liberties as New Creatures with these blemishes of the old nature—the natural man. Nor is it possible to make this question entirely clear to the natural man because, as the Apostle says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. 2:14.

Even to those whom the Scriptures recognize as "New Creatures," begotten again of the holy Spirit, the elucidation of this question is difficult, because so many "New Creatures" fail to recognize the difference between the new (I) and the old (I). The newly begotten spirit is represented by the new will, and the old flesh is reckoned dead when we are begotten again. The New Creature, having no proper body until it shall experience its resurrection "change," is permitted to use the fleshly body as its servant, which is reckoned alive for that purpose. This body is subsequently reckoned as having passed from death unto life to be the body and servant of the New Creature until the latter shall have eventually experienced its perfecting in the resurrection "change," in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. The Apostle explains this new relationship between the spirit-begotten mind or will and the body reckoned dead and reckoned as awakened again, saying, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwelleth in you." The power of God which was sufficient to raise Jesus from the dead a quickening Spirit is surely powerful enough to operate in our mortal bodies so as to permit us (New Creatures) to use them in God's service.

Liberty of the Sons of God

Let us get the proper thought: The holy Spirit is a spirit of liberty—God "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth": he seeks not the worship and service of slaves under bondage and restraints. Hence amongst the angels we may be sure there is no compulsion to divine service—they all serve willingly, gladly, joyfully. We may be sure that it is the ultimate design of God that every creature throughout the universe which has not and will not come into absolute harmony with the Creator—no other restraint but of joyful willingness— shall ultimately be destroyed as unworthy of further divine favors unto life eternal. But mankind is not in this free condition. The liberty of the sons of God was lost to our race through the disobedience of our first parents: we were alienated from God, and came under his sentence of death as unfit for eternal life.

The Scriptures tell us that we were "sold under sin"—sold into bondage, servitude, into sin, by the disobedience of our first parents. The world is still in this bondage, and hence is not free in any sense of the word, and should not be. As bond-slaves of sin, the world must wait for the deliverance which God has willed and will fully provide, and of which the Apostle writes, saying, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." "For the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:19-22.) Here the Apostle tells us that the world's liberty awaits the dawning of the Millennial morning, when the sons of God, Christ the Bridegroom and the Elect Church his Bride, shall be manifest in power and great glory as the divinely appointed Royal Priesthood, judges for the world—to lift them out of bondage to sin and death, and by restitution processes to give back to them, by the close of the Millennium, the full perfection of their human nature and a perfect home, and divine favor and blessing unto everlasting life—all the unwilling and disobedient being destroyed in the Second Death.

"Now Are We the Sons of God"

With one voice Jesus and his apostles assure us that those of the human family who have had the ear to hear and the heart to appreciate the message of God's grace in Christ, God has been willing to accept as sons of God, and to accord to them the liberty of the sons of God without their waiting for the times of restitution to secure these favors. Those who by faith have the eyes of their understanding opened and who evidently hear, are reckoned as justified—as made right in God's sight—because their minds are right, their wills are right, however imperfect their flesh may be. Those of this class who consecrated themselves irrevocably to the Lord and were begotten of the Spirit were counted New Creatures, of a new nature, to whom old things had passed away and all things had become new—who henceforth walked not after the desires of the flesh but after the desires of the Spirit. These are the New Creation, begotten by the Lord's Spirit.

It is to these New Creatures that God has accorded liberty—not to the world nor even to the flesh of the New Creation. The New Creature, because in full accord with the Lord, may be granted full liberty; and hence it is that the Church, the body of Christ, is left without bondage to any law except that they shall love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, and their neighbor as themselves. They are entirely free within these limitations, which are the very most that could be granted under the divine arrangement, which recognizes only those who have the Spirit of God as being sons of God and having any liberty whatever as such.

Conflict Between the Flesh and Spirit

Here arises the conflict: the spirit indeed is willing to use its liberty only to the glory of God, but the flesh is artful, cunning, strong. Although condemned to death, "crucified with Christ" and "dying daily," as the New Creature grows "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might," nevertheless the flesh—always contrary to the spirit on these subjects—argues for its rights, its privileges, its liberties, in a manner which the New Creature, the new mind, the new will, must frequently disregard, deny. It is a trick of the condemned flesh to appeal to the New Creature along the line of personal liberty, pointing out in the words of our lesson that all things are lawful to it—that is, that there is no law restraining its liberty, and that therefore it should grant to the flesh larger concessions in some respects, at least, than the world would enjoy.

Our lesson is the Apostle's answer to such an appeal: he declares that while nothing is forbidden the New Creature under direct divine law, it is also true that there are many things that would be inexpedient, ill-advised, contrary to its best interests, its strengthening, its development: hence such inexpedient things should be noted, and the interests of the New Creation should always decide the question, although the New Creature, begotten of the Spirit of God, loving God supremely and his neighbor as himself, is forbidden nothing. It is to be remembered, says the Apostle, that not all things edify, profit, strengthen, build up, encourage. And whatever is not to edification is not profitable, and is not to be entertained or practised regardless of law on the subject.

"Am I My Brother's Keeper?"

Continuing his argument along this line, the Apostle shows that the New Creature, while not restrained by law, is restrained from many things by his own nature. Begotten of the spirit of love, and loving his neighbor as himself, he is bound to think not only of what would be harmless to himself but also to consider what would be helpful or injurious to his neighbor: hence, as the Apostle says, none of us should seek his own welfare merely, but each also his neighbor's welfare. In a word, the Apostle shows that the New Creature is his brother's keeper in the sense that he must consider his brother's interests as well as his own. Not that he should interfere with his brother's rights, privileges and interests, and be a busybody in other men's matters, but that he should allow the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love, to so thoroughly fill his own heart that he would be a helper and not a stumbling-block to the brethren.

These New Creatures to whom the Apostle ministered resided in the midst of civilized heathendom, and hence were exposed to trials along lines very different from those affecting the converts from Judaism residing in Palestine, where the surroundings would be godly at least. Not that the Christians of Palestine had no difficulties, for we know that they had their special trials in respect to the demands of the Law, the usages of the synagogues and the Temple, etc., but the Apostle was now discussing the special trials of Christians in foreign lands. The custom of that time was to offer animals as sacrifices to idols, and then to give the carcasses of the animals to the priests, who in turn sold these through butchers in the public markets. Hence those who would eat meat at all would find it almost impossible to avoid eating meat that had been offered to idols. This was a serious point and a very perplexing question: what should they do? Some were stronger of mind than others, and could understand that an idol was nothing, and that therefore the offering of meat before nothing could do it no injury. However, all were not thus minded: some brethren and sisters were weaker—unable to draw such a distinction, and for these New Creatures to live conscientiously would mean that they must deny themselves frequently the use of such meat. The case would be particularly difficult where some of the members of the families were Christians and others were not. No wonder the Apostle referred to this question in more than one of his epistles and indicated its importance.

There were two sides to the question: The idol being nothing, the offering of the food to it being nothing, the personal liberty question alone would be in dispute, for there was no law given on this matter except the law of love. The other side of the argument would be that the brother who could not conscientiously partake of such meat might have too much pride or an insufficiency of courage to follow his convictions, and might thus violate his conscience in trying to keep pace with another whose eyes of understanding open more widely or more quickly. The Apostle's exhortation is that these should be remembered, and that the one of broader comprehension should be willing to consider his brother and not to stumble his conscience—be willing to refrain from eating such meat rather than run the risk of injuring his brother, whom Christ so loved that he died for him.

"Eat, Asking No Questions"

In the verses preceding our lesson the Apostle urges great care on the part of believers, pointing out to them that God delivered the nation of Israel, but that subsequently, because of their lack of loyalty, he permitted them to die, some for one offence and some for another. His suggestion is that we, having been set free from the bondage of Satan, should be careful how we use our liberty, lest it become to us a snare, a stumbling-stone. In view of the prevalence of idolatry at that time he felt it expedient to urge the Church, saying, "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry." (1 Cor. 10:14.) He then proceeds to contrast the feast which marks us as Christians—the Memorial of our Lord's death—with the heathen feasts to which many of the Lord's people would undoubtedly be invited, and in which they would be exposed to various misleading influences which might prove injurious to them as New Creatures in Christ, tending to relax their vigilance over the flesh and to hinder them from progress in growth as New Creatures. He points out that there is a fellowship, a communion, implied in our partaking of our Lord's loaf and the Lord's cup—that we thus indicate that all of the New Creation are members of the body of Christ, participants in the same joys, blessings, hopes, promises and sufferings. Then he declares that in the feasts of the heathen not God but devils were worshipped, and he asks what communion or fellowship could there be between the table of the Lord and the table of devils, and between those who feast at the Lord's table on the heavenly spiritual things and those who were more or less identified with the heathendom of the time. The implication is that there is no fellowship, no communion.

Although in our day conditions are in many respects much more favorable, nevertheless there is some similarity. Many of our dear friends and relatives fail to worship the true God, the God of love and wisdom and power, but the declaration is that Christ has been provided as a "ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Many on the contrary, while thinking that they worship God, really worship "doctrines of devils," of which they are ashamed, and by which they are hindered and restrained from progress in the Lord's good way. While we should sympathize with these and with all mankind in their blindness and superstition, yet what communion, what fellowship could there be between ideas so diametrically opposite? What fellowship of worship and teaching could there be between such and those who recognize God as the loving, merciful One who willeth not the death of him that dieth, but who would that all should turn unto him and live. . . .

The Apostle points out the reasonable, proper course to be followed under such circumstances. If a Christian of that time were invited to a feast he was not bound to suppose that the meat had been offered to idols, and therefore not bound to refuse it. On the contrary, he might give thanks and eat it without injury to his conscience if able to see the matter in its true, proper light. But if some brother said to him, The meat provided here has been offered to idols, and I fear that it would be wrong for us to eat it, then, says the Apostle, it should not be eaten for the sake of the brother who indicated his own knowledge and fear—for his conscience' sake—lest he should be stumbled. I am to be willing, yea, glad to deny myself what otherwise would have been my liberty, my privilege, since my conscience was not at all involved, but clearly discerned that the idol was nothing and did no injury whatever to the meat. How grand is this lesson of brotherly consideration;—yet it is strictly within the lines of the law of love, for are we not to do to our brother or neighbor as to ourselves? and would we think it right to risk our own spiritual standing for a morsel of meat? How then could we risk our brother's standing on such a consideration? The law of our liberty in Christ, love, must govern our conduct automatically on every occasion. The Lord wishes us to learn, not as children, certain fixed rules, but as philosophers the fixed principles which can be applied. . . .

"All to the Glory of God"

The Apostle sums up his argument in favor of loving consideration for our brethren and liberty of conscience for ourselves—"Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God." More than thirty years ago this text was so impressed upon the mind of the writer (Bro. Russell) that he had it beautifully painted on glass and it still greets the eyes of visitors to the Watch Tower office, the Bible House parlor and the Editor's study. It is difficult to imagine a more comprehensive statement of the Christian's liberty and limitations than is expressed in these words. To whatever extent one learns to govern thoughts, words and deeds by this glorious precept he is becoming more and more filled with the spirit of the law of love, strengthened in character and meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. This limitation to what would be to "the glory of God" will enter into and affect all the affairs of life if we will only permit it. A dear brother now deceased told us on the occasion of our first meeting that for years he had been a nominal Christian, first a Congregationalist and subsequently an Episcopalian, and always fond of his personal liberty: but how, failing to see the other side of the question, he had allowed his liberty to lead him into various excesses. He felt that he was exercising his personal liberty when he drank wine and occasionally played a social game of cards with the rector of his Church, and generally he felt at liberty to do whatever would not be in violation of the laws of the land.

His inquiry was, "Brother Russell, can you explain to me the change which has come over my life: I do not understand it myself. My friends used to hand me tracts in opposition to wine and tobacco, etc., but I pooh-poohed them and said in effect, 'I am as good as you; mind your own business and let me mind mine. I am violating no law. I am merely exercising my personal liberty.' But, Brother Russell, since I read Millennial Dawn, Vol. I, a change has come over me, and those practices which I once considered my liberty I now esteem to be my snares and avoid them. The matter came about in this way: I first asked myself, Is that time spent with the rector playing cards a profitable use of my time? Are you doing it to the glory of God? And as for the wine, do you use that to the glory of God?. I was obliged to answer both questions in the negative and discontinued both practices. It was not long after this that I found myself striking a match and about to light my usual cigar. The thought of doing all things to the glory of God came to my mind afresh and I said, 'Can you smoke that cigar to the glory of God?' It took a little time to decide the question, for I had been in the habit of smoking on an average ten cigars a day. That match went out and I struck another while still thinking. I finally decided that I could not smoke the cigar to God's glory and I threw it away. It was only a short time after that that I found myself feeling for my fine-cut tobacco, and about to take it as a substitute for the cigar. Again the question arose, Can you chew the tobacco to the glory of God? My judgment answered, No! and I threw away the tobacco. I have never used either since. Conscious that the thing that had influenced me to this course was the reading of the Dawn I reexamined the volume carefully, but could find in it no tirade against the practices I had just discontinued—no recommendations even along sumptuary lines. I want to ask you what it was in the Dawn that effected such a revolution in my life." We replied that the Dawn, instead of attacking the branches of evil, followed the Scriptural course of laying the axe to the root of the tree. Whoever realizes the true meaning of his consecration vow, the true significance of his begettal of the holy Spirit, the true meaning of the perfect law of liberty under which he has come, the law of love, will find it ample for the regulation of all of life's affairs, for he must seek thereafter that whether he eats or drinks or whatever he does **ALL shall be to the glory of God.**

"Give None Offence"

The Apostle carries this thought of our personal responsibility in seeking God's glory to its legitimate conclusion. He shows that we will be disinclined to do anything that will stumble either Jews or Greeks or the Church of God. And he declares in the last verse of the lesson that this was his own course in life—that so far as possible in line with his conscience he sought to be pleasing to all men in all things—disregarding his own advantage and considering chiefly the profit of the many that he might do all possible for their salvation. This noble spirit is the only one consistent with our law of liberty—love which is always generous, thoughtful of the interest of others, unselfish, not proud, boastful, greedy:—not ill-mannered, not careless of the interests and feelings of others, either in the great or in the small things of life—the present or the future. We are glad that the Apostle was able to call attention to his own course as an exemplification of his teaching. And this should be the rule with all of us, not merely to give precepts but to follow them with example.

The Apostle in the next verse, which should be a part of the same chapter, says, "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ." It would have been strangely inconsistent of the Apostle to set himself up as an example in anything except as he had pointed out either directly or indirectly that he could be an example only because he was a follower in the footsteps of the Redeemer. Christ is the pattern of us all, though we may learn to appreciate the grandeur of his example better by our closer contact with some who are walking in his steps and with whose experiences we may be able the more closely to sympathize. O that this lesson of the import of our law of liberty in all the affairs of life might be with us with increasing force, not only in our own affairs but also in our relationship in the Church, the body of Christ, that each might be the more careful as the days go by to exemplify the love of Christ,—the love of God, the love of the brethren—the love even of our enemies.—Z. '07: 171-175.

The Philosophy of Our Daily Experiences

"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"—Heb. 12:7.

ALL CHASTENINGS are **testings**, but all chastenings are not necessarily **punishments**. We should judge of the purpose of our experiences by self-examination, that we may ascertain whether in our conduct there has been something out of harmony with the Father's will. In every case our experience is a test of our loyalty of heart—as to our willingness to learn the lessons which the Lord is seeking to teach us and our recognition of the source from which they come.

The trials and difficulties of the consecrated child of God are not to be esteemed as the results of Divine carelessness or indifference in regard to his interests, but rather as the outworkings of Divine providence in his behalf. Those who can see the matter from this viewpoint are thus enabled to learn some of life's most helpful lessons, and are thereby prepared for the glorious future which God has arranged for those who faithfully carry out their Covenant of sacrifice.

Ordinarily the word chastisement is used to signify correction for wrongdoing. But in the Bible, it is especially used to convey the thought of discipline or instruction in righteousness. Sometimes we use it in this way in the ordinary affairs of life. If we **sin**, we receive punishment indeed. But those who are trying to do right are continually receiving discipline of the Lord. There is a purpose in this training, or chastisement. The Church is learning how to build character pleasing in the Father's sight, to be well qualified for particular service; and discipline is the means employed for that instruction.

If a man were about to train a dog for the circus, he would first choose the right kind of animal for that special service. He would not think of selecting any chance poodle that might come to hand, but would find a dog that was capable of being taught. In carrying out his course of instruction, he might find it necessary to chastise the dog in order to teach him some trick. This would not mean that the animal was bad, surly or vicious, but that there was no other way by which he could learn. An animal that was being fitted to guard the house would not need the same training that was necessary for the dog that was to perform in public. The watch-dog must know how to guard property; but the animal that is to jump through hoops, etc., must be trained carefully by those who have in mind his future career.

So with the Church. They need practical lessons in character-development of a very high order, and consequently they are receiving experimental knowledge such as no other creatures in the universe receive. Because they are trying to live righteously, trying to please the Heavenly Father, they are being chastened for instruction, that they may be fully conformed to the Divine will, that they may lay aside their own preferences, that they may not do their own will, but that of the Lord.

Such experiences are not for mankind in general. Such experiences were not given to Adam. He was required to live merely in harmony with his environment and to be obedient to the Heavenly Father. Such experiences are not for the angels. They are required merely to live righteously, to avoid sin and to use their bodies in harmony with the Divine purposes of their creation. They occupy such positions as are natural to them. Therefore the angels have never required chastisements.

Suffering Develops Character of a High Order

With those, however, who are to be associated with the Redeemer and ultimately to be exalted to the Divine nature and glory, it is necessary that they make special manifestations of loyalty, of self-abasement and of self-sacrifice. What was true of Christ is also true of the Church, which is His Body, and which He purchased with His own precious blood. (Col. 1:24; Acts 20:28.) We are called to follow in His footsteps; hence every son whom the Father receives is chastised.—Heb. 12:6, 7.

Every child of God will need chastening. If we wander from the paths of righteousness, we are chastened to bring us back; but even if we did not wander, we should still need chastisement, that we might learn obedience. Our Lord Himself learned obedience by the things which He suffered. (Heb. 5:8.) Of St. Paul the Lord said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts 9:16.) The Apostle was put through disciplinary experiences because he was a favored child of God.

We revert to our illustration of the dog under training for a special purpose. The dog must yield himself submissively to his teacher. Another dog that was watching the process by which the one was being trained might think that he was suffering unnecessary hardship, and might feel that if it were himself, he would assert his rights and not suffer so much. But in the end the trained animal would prove to be the more valuable, for the one that had escaped the suffering would remain only a commonplace dog.

So it is with the Church. There are people who say of us, "Those who endeavor to do God's will suffer more than do those who do not try; we do not care to undertake any such experience." These people may succeed in having fewer trials in the present life, but they will have blessings of a lower order in the world to come, when the faithful Church will be glorified with her Lord and Head.

These experiences with trouble are the very tests of character necessary for our development. The reason why some of the consecrated will get into the Great Company is that they have not had enough determination—enough strength of character. In the time of trouble, such will either develop that strength by faithfulness under severe trial or they will go into the Second Death.

The Great Company class are loyal in heart or they would not be in that class. But they are will ing to **compromise**; and because of this willingness to do so, they weaken their character. In order to be **overcomers** they must develop this element of character at any cost.

Let us be thankful that we are of those who appreciate the privilege of being trained in the School of Christ—of suffering with Him now and of reigning with Him by and by. In this school we are learning valuable lessons of experience. Here we receive chastisements, many of which are not punishments for sins, but preparation for the work of the next Age. Let us remember that unless we are willing to learn these lessons and to endure hardness, we shall not be prepared to enter into the eternal glory.—2 Tim. 2:3; 1 Pet. 5:10.

All things are ours; for we are Christ's and Christ is God's, and God called Christ to these glorious experiences. (1 Cor. 3:21-23.) Whoever does not appreciate the spiritual joys can hardly be expected to endure the present training with patience and thankfulness. We must see something of "the glory that shall follow" (1 Pet. 1:11) in order to realize the necessity of the vicissitudes of the present trial time.—Z. '12:388, 389.

Rejoicing in Tribulation

Acts 16:22-34.

THE first city in Macedonia—the first city, therefore, in Europe—to hear the Gospel message, was Philippi. One of the Apostle Paul's epistles, addressed to the church there established, is known to us as the "Epistle to the Philippians."

At Philippi the Apostle and his companions, in seeking for those who reverenced the Lord, and hence most likely to have hearing ears for the Gospel, found a little group who met by the riverside for worship. Lydia, one of the number, became prominent for her thorough acceptance of the Gospel message, and her zeal in entertaining the Apostle and his company, and in forwarding, as best she could, the interests of the cause. The meetings were held outside the city, doubtless, on a similar pretext to that which, until recent years, excluded the worship of Protestants in the city of Rome, compelling them to go outside the city if they would hold any gatherings for worship. Philippi had its approved religious system, and would grant liberty for meetings to no other.

It was while the apostles were day by day passing from Lydia's home to the place of worship outside the city gate that they were met repeatedly by a young woman known in that city as a Pythoness, or Sybil (a sooth-sayer or truth-teller or fortune-teller; a foreteller of future events, or prophetess). She was evidently well known to all the people, and the exercise of her profession brought large income to a joint-stock company which owned her as its slave. As the evangelists passed daily she called out after them, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation." These words, though true enough, coming from such a source, and possibly in a jesting voice, might be understood by those who heard them to be sarcasm, ridicule, and, therefore, a hindrance to the Lord's work; or even if uttered in serious tones their coming from such an unsanctified quarter would probably preclude their having any favorable influence with those of such cast of mind and heart as might otherwise have a hearing ear for the Gospel of Christ. This continued many days, the Apostle gradually becoming more and more grieved by it—probably because it was hindering his mission, and perhaps, also, because he was grieved to see a fellow-creature thus made a tool of by the fallen angels, the wicked spirits which controlled her. Similarly our Lord refused to recognize the testimony of the evil spirit who acknowledged him, saying, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God," and had compassion upon the one who had the evil spirit, and delivered him.—Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34.

Present-day higher critics and lower critics are disposed to dispute that there are evil spirits, and that human beings ever are or ever were possessed by demons. Such incline to suppose that either deception or insanity was mistaken by the Lord and the apostles in these cases of obsession. However, to those who have learned to respect the Word of God there is no room for questioning the accounts. Our Lord commanded evil spirits to come out of possessed ones, and they obeyed him; and in this case the Apostle Paul invoked the same divine power for the healing of this young woman—for her deliverance from the evil spirit being which had obtained possession of her and made her its slave, speaking through her, and otherwise using her mouth, ears, etc., as channels of communication. These fallen angels adapt themselves to the varying conditions of humanity in all parts of the world, and in connection with all the various systems of religion, all of which we may properly accredit, more or less directly, to the great Adversary of the truth, who worketh by and through those who will submit themselves.

As this young woman was a money-winner for the people who owned her, we can imagine what consternation was aroused amongst them when they found that not only was their source of gain for the future gone, but also that the large amount of money invested in this slave was lost (for such spirit-possessed ones had a high market value): they became desperately angry. Nothing will so greatly move men as love or selfishness; and under present conditions selfishness moves the vast majority, and with intense power. They had no hope of getting the evil spirit back into the woman: they must have revenge upon those who had financially ruined them. There is much of this spirit abroad in the world today. . . .

The owners of the Pythoness evidently had influence, and succeeded quickly in arousing a mob determined to have revenge against Paul and Silas. Of course they did not attempt this by telling the truth. They did not say, We were using a poor slave girl, possessed of an evil spirit, for our financial profit, and these men have restored her mind, her will—released her from mental enslavement to saneness of mind. No; like all who are engaged in a bad cause, they ignored the truth of the matter, and raised spurious charges—that the prisoners were teaching a religion contrary to the laws of Rome, and likely thus to raise sedition. We see that this was contrary to the truth, for the Lord's servants went, according to law, outside the city gates for their worship. However, under the circumstances the false charge, without proofs, was sufficient to bring down upon the Lord's representatives the severest penalties their judges could inflict: their clothing was torn from them, and the command was given that they should be beaten with rods and imprisoned. The customary sentence of the time was, "Go, victors! Tear off their garments! Scourge them!" This was one of the three times Paul was thus beaten. (2 Cor. 11:25.) He referred to it in his letter to the Thessalonians, declaring that he was "shamefully" treated at Philippi.—1 Thess. 2:2.

The prison was constructed with outer cells, which were more or less accessible to the light and air, and with an inner or central dungeon for the most vicious criminals. It was into the latter that Paul and Silas were thrust, and their feet made fast in the stocks, which often were so constructed as to separate the limbs widely and to make any movement very painful. It was under these unfavorable circumstances, with their backs bleeding and raw from the scourging, that reflecting upon the wonders of the divine plan, and their own association with that plan, these faithful brethren were so filled with the spirit of rejoicing that they gave vent to their feelings in hymn-prayers of thankfulness for their privilege of suffering in connection with the Lord's service, of enduring tribulation for righteousness' sake.

How remarkable it must seem to the worldly, who have never tasted of the joys of the Lord, that these men could thus rejoice in tribulation—rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer afflictions for the cause of Christ! How little the world knows of the peace of God which passeth all understanding, that rules in the hearts of the Lord's people who have grown in his grace and heart-likeness! How little can they appreciate the fact expressed by our Lord when he said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." And again, through the Apostle, "We glory in tribulation, also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." (John 14:27; Rom. 5:3-5.) And as these faithful servants of the Lord could rejoice in whatever experiences God permitted to come to them in the discharge of duty, so may we remember that ours is the same God, that he changes not; that he is equally able and equally willing today to grant the sunshine of his favor to those who trust him and seek to walk in his ways. It is the reverse condition that the followers of Christ need to dread, need to fear, as expressed by the poet,

> "Oh, let no earthborn cloud arise
> To hide thee from thy servant's eyes!"

In a general sense, the entire Gospel age is represented as being a night, in which sin and distress prevail, and, as the Prophet has declared, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"—when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams, to scatter all the miasm of sin and death! But even in this nighttime the Lord's people do not need to sorrow as others, who have no hope. On the contrary, to his people, "He giveth songs in the night." (Job 35:10.) While they are watching, hoping, praying, for the glorious morning of deliverance, their trust in the Lord is as an anchor to their souls within the vail. How could such children of the great King go mourning all their days? Surely especially now, as the Millennial morning is dawning, we can say, "He hath put a new song into our mouths, even the loving kindness of our God!" He has given his people the blessed privilege of singing the new song of Moses and the Lamb, that others cannot sing—at least not yet. These who sing and make melody in their hearts unto the Lord will surely also show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light—theirs will be the psalm of life, manifesting in looks and words and tones and sentiments the love of God received into good and honest hearts.

Since as Christians we have learned that it is our privilege to be always rejoicing—to rejoice evermore and in everything give thanks—we need not, like the world, wait for special manifestations of divine favor to call forth our praise, our homage of heart and our grateful obedience to the Lord. Rather, learning that divine providence is in all of our affairs, ready to shape them for our good, we may rejoice "whatever lot we see, since 'tis God's hand that leadeth us." Some one has well said:—

"If we are not ready to praise God where we are, and with our conditions and circumstances as they are, we should not be likely to praise him if we were differently circumstanced and our conditions just that which now seems to us most desirable. Daniel could sleep better in the den of lions than Darius in the royal palace; he who could not find rest in a lion's den, when that was the place for him, could not gain rest by a mere removal to a palace. It is the man's self which must be changed, not his circumstances or his possessions, in order to his having a heart overflowing with joy and praise."

When, in 1695, Madame Guyon was imprisoned in the Castle of Vincennes, she sang praises to the Lord, composing one of her own hymns, as follows:

"A little bird I am,
  Shut from the fields and air;
And in my songs I sit and sing
  To him who placed me there:
Well pleased a prisoner thus to be.
  Because, my God, it pleaseth thee.

"My cage confines me round,
  Abroad I cannot fly:
But though my wing is closely bound,
  My heart's at liberty;
My prison walls can not control
The flight, the freedom, of the soul."
—Z. '02:379-381.

Good Courage Required

"Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."—Psa. 31:24.

THE Scriptures everywhere encourage the Lord's people to be full of faith, hope, confidence, trust. As we look out into the world we see particular reasons why this should be so. The majority of the world are full of fear, apprehension, distrust, worry. For this reason they fail to get the best out of the opportunities they have. They know of pitfalls of sin and trouble in different directions, and therefore they have reason to be distrustful, to be fearful.

But the Lord's people have come into special relationship with Him and He with them. He has assured them that He will have a supervision of their affairs, as would not have been their experience had they not come into relationship with Him. They are, therefore, to hope in the Lord, to trust in Him. They are to heed the things which He has said, and to take courage in the thought that their affairs are under His supervision.

God's people have stepped out from the world and joined the standard of the Lord Jesus Christ—the standard of righteousness, truth, holiness, opposition to sin and the Adversary. They will be beset by powerful enemies. Against them will be arrayed Satan himself, who will seek to oppose them, as he has opposed all of God's plans. He can make no direct attack upon the Lord, but he can attack His Plan and those who believe in God. He it is who instigated the riots, the tumults and the persecutions in the days of the Lord, and subsequently instigated the persecution of the Lord's people.

Satan has not done these things with his own personal touch, but through his deluded servants. He has ever opposed righteousness and all those who love righteousness. On this account the Lord's people need to have great courage: for if they allow the Adversary to beat their courage down, he will soon put them out of the battle entirely. A retreating soldier is of no more good than one who has not gone out to battle. Instead of losing courage we are to resign our earthly interests to our Father and trust Him that in the present life He will guide us, will overrule everything for good to those who are "the called according to His purpose."

Besides the Adversary, we have the general spirit of the world to oppose us. The world considers us foolish in thinking that we have any special Divine supervision—that God loves us. They say to us, God has made all the worlds, the thousands of angels, etc. Do you imagine that He has any special interest in you? They tell us that if there is a God, He is so great and we so small that He cannot take any notice of us. Thus they would beat our faith down. And this is the sentiment of the world, even when it is not expressed. And whenever we come in contact with worldly people we find, as it were, a wet blanket thrown on our simple trust, even though they say not a word to us. We need to have good courage and to hope in the Lord, as our text enjoins.

Then, additionally, we have our own flesh. Each of us has in himself, in his own body, an opponent. The Scriptures represent that when we gave ourselves to the Lord and He gave us His Holy Spirit, we there passed through a transformation and became embryo spirit beings, the embryo having this mortal body in which to develop until the moment of resurrection, when we shall pass from the earthly to the Heavenly condition. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."—1 Corinthians 15:42-44.

But while we are in the flesh, we have all the motions of the flesh. We as New Creatures have disowned these. We have turned our backs upon sin. We have exchanged the earthly interests and hopes for the Heavenly interests and hopes. By our daily experiences the Lord is testing us. We must be on guard to overcome the flesh. It requires a great deal of courage to fight down the tendencies to sin. And it requires still more courage that, after battling with the weaknesses and frailties of the flesh, and conquering it, we should additionally force our human bodies to sacrifice, to abandon the earthly things, and to serve the Lord. It requires a great deal of courage; therefore we are of ourselves insufficient.

Different Kinds of Courage

But we are exhorted to put our trust in the Lord, and assured that we "can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth us." (Phil. 4:13.) His is a power sufficient for us. It requires all our courage, all our hope—every helpful element that we can put into the fight—in order to bring about the most successful issue. But the Lord supplies sufficient grace so that we may be overcomers. This does not mean that any one will live a perfect life; and he may not fully exercise this good courage. He may make partial failures from time to time.

But our Lord is leading us on, and we learn valuable lessons from our failures.

Some, having stronger faith and hope, having their minds fully centered on the Lord, have gone forward courageously. This is called **good courage** in the sense of being **strong** courage, proper courage. We might also associate with our text the thought that this **hope in the Lord** is to be backed up by a good courage, a right kind of courage, a godly courage.

There is a courage that is born of pride, which would say: Do not back down. Do not let anybody get ahead of you. In a battle the soldiers will vie with one another, each having a desire to do something especially conspicuous, which will bring him the applause of his fellows. They need something to inspire them—desire for fame, love of country, music, etc.—in order to give them courage to run the risk of losing their own lives, or to take the lives of other human beings. And this is the kind of courage that will help them to gain the victory in their battle, even though it will be an unworthy motive for inspiring courage.

But a courage from **right** principles, based on faith in the Lord, is not one of braggadocio, but a courage that is noble and pleasing to God. It has its source in a realization that **God has promised,** and that God is watching, and desires us to be joint-heirs with His Son in His Kingdom. He is merely testing us to see whether we will prove faithful. And this courage with us must also be to do things in the right way. . . .

Courage Proportionate to Faith

There are trials and difficulties in the life of each one, great and small. The right kind of courage finds an opportunity to exercise itself in each of God's children. And this is what the Lord is looking for. He is looking for this kind of courage, a courage such as must be found in overcomers. It is only to **overcomers** that any place will be granted in the Kingdom. Whoever has not **good courage** will not be in the Kingdom at all. Hence the lesson of our text is, **Be of good courage;** for this is the way in which we shall demonstrate our faith in the Lord. He who hopes in the Lord and is loyal to the Lord will be courageous in proportion to his loyalty and his faith.

This kind of courage will stand by us in all circumstances. For instance, our Lord in addressing His disciples on one occasion said, "Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake: . . . take no thought [beforehand] how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak." (Matt. 10:18, 19.) The Lord's people, whatever circumstances may arise, will have such faith and trust in God that they will conduct themselves courageously, relying on God's power. The Greek here seems to give the thought: **Do not be worried** when you shall be brought before kings and judges.

The way in which God will give us a mouth and wisdom may vary according to circumstances—perhaps by suggestions from another; perhaps in the hearing of the testimony of some one else; or it may be that a text of Scripture that would be especially helpful would come to our mind. But the thought is that our trust is in the Lord, and that we are not to be in fear and trembling.

The Lord addressed these words to His disciples—the ignorant and unlearned. For them to be brought before kings and magistrates and judges would naturally cause them much apprehension. What should they say? How could they answer those men—those great, learned men! They were very humble, and they realized their ignorance; but the Lord guided them. Education was much less general then than now. Today, practically all are educated to some extent. The assurance of the Lord would, therefore, apply less forcefully to us today, than it would to the disciples then living.

But if we are in any straits, any difficulties, we are to remember that the Scriptures assure us that "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear [reverence] Him, and delivereth them." (Psa. 34:7.) This thought should tend to make us cool and collected in our minds, and should enable us to conduct ourselves courageously, feeling ourselves in this close relationship with Him, and having the confidence that this thought would give us. Furthermore, we realize that we are not wise enough to know just what God's purposes respecting us may be. We know not, therefore, just how the Lord may prefer to have this or that matter eventuate.

"Faith Can Firmly Trust Him"

The early disciples, thinking of Jesus and what He had said to them, thought: Jesus is certainly a good man; God would not allow any disaster to befall Him. Thus they pondered, as they thought of the things that Jesus had predicted for Himself. St. Peter said to Him, "Thou are the Christ, the Son of the Living God!" (Matt. 16:16.) And they thought, How could God allow any harm to come to Him? So the disciples concluded that these things He had said must be figures of speech, just as when He said, "You must eat My flesh" and "drink My blood." So now when He said that the Son of Man would be crucified, they thought it was one of His peculiar sayings that they could not understand.

Hence they were quite perturbed, wondering and astonished, when He was arrested and taken before the Jewish Sanhedrin, and when, instead of using His powers and His eloquence, He was **dumb,** and allowed Himself to be contradicted and maligned. Then He was taken before Pilate. Now, the disciples thought, Jesus surely will not hesitate before him! Hence the surprise and astonishment of the disciples again when things turned out so contrary to what they had expected. But such a course on our Lord's part was **necessary** in the Heavenly Father's Plan, not merely for the Lord Jesus, that He might suffer and then enter into His glory, but necessary also for the world, because the **redemption price must be laid down,** must be in the hands of Justice.

We see that the Lord has declared that His people shall not be especially protected along earthly lines; and if in His Wisdom it is best in any way to bruise us and put us to shame, as was done with our Master, we are to be of good courage, and He will strengthen our hearts, because we trust in Him, we have confidence in Him. We know that He is too wise to err, and that there must be a motive, a reason for the permission, whatever it may be. We know assuredly that the saintly ones are precious in the sight of the Lord—are as the apple of His eye; and thus we know that all things are working together for good to us.

So we do not necessarily anticipate that a certain form of words will be given to us, before either judges or princes. We are not necessarily free from worldly condemnation. We are to remember that these words of the Master were applicable to our Lord Himself and to the Apostles; that Jesus was condemned and crucified; that the Apostles were condemned and were put into prison and received stripes on several occasions. And later most of them were killed.

Whatever may be the outcome of any matter to us, we are to accept it as from the Lord, whether we are able to discern the reason for it or not. We are to have faith and hope, even though the way is rough, and even though things might seem to be the very reverse of what we expected. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord."—Psalm 27:14; Z. '13:309-311.

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WE CANNOT IMAGINE a case in which a brother with average intelligence would need comfort and counsel in a misunderstanding other than that for which the Lord has provided in Matt. 18:15-17. If he has been in the habit of seeking sympathy in a busy-bodying manner, the sooner he knows that his course is wrong the better. He should learn to use his own mind along lines where there is positive instruction in the Scriptures. The Lord says to any one who has aught against his brother, "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him **alone.**" If the matter is too small to mention to the brother, it is too small to notice and should be forgotten.

There are no **exceptions** to the rule laid down in Matt. 18:15-17.—Z. '12:81.

◆

We are so constituted that reverence for God and desire for prayer are among the highest qualities of our nature. The organs of veneration and spirituality lie at the top of our head. And those who are not enjoying the exercise of these highest qualities are not getting the proper blessing out of life. Instead of living in the **parlor** of their brains, so to speak, some people live in the **basement.** Our true enjoyment comes from the exercise of the highest faculties of the head. Here we can commune with God respecting the highest things, the noblest things, the best things.

The natural tendency of some is toward the **baser** qualities of the human mind, rather than the higher ones, that of others is toward the **nobler** sentiments. But all are imperfect. Therefore when any have turned from sin and come into the School of Christ, they are instructed to pray, because this will enable them to get the best results from their own natural combination of faculties. **By coming to the Lord with regularity in prayer they are enlisting the best qualities of their own minds.** Thus the New Creature is using the highest faculties of the old nature to wean the old creature from the natural habits which he had cultivated through weaknesses of the flesh.—Z. '13:278.

◆

The special love of fellowship, is not to be exercised toward the world,—to whom belongs only the love of pity and sympathy, not toward Satan or any of the wilful enemies of the Lord and his cause, against whom true love and loyalty to God ever arrays us in vigilant and determined opposition,—but toward **the brethren**—toward them of like precious faith and hope, and of one mind with us, and the Lord. Fervent love, the love of true brotherly fellowship, should indeed exist among all such. They should be in fullest sympathy and co-operation. They should bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ; they should in honor prefer one another, and in love each esteem the other better than himself. They should love as brethren, be pitiful, courteous, kind, gentle, true and loyal. As Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you."—John 13:34; Z. '94:215.

◆

The lives of God's people should in every case be "living epistles known and read of all men"—especially by their own families. Those lives should testify not only to the completeness of the consecration to the Lord, but also to the peace and joy and comfort resulting. "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts; and be ye thankful." (Colossians 3:15.) Your being a living epistle, without a single word of exhortation, will be powerful in its lessons to all those directly under your influence.—Z. '14:334.

◆

Much will depend upon the **degree** of our faith. —Z. '14:109.

◆

It is a wholly mistaken idea that any of us is commissioned to set everybody else right. It betokens a great deal of pride to have such an impression. If some brother and sister do not harmonize very well let them alone. If they think it best not to be very intimate, let them alone—mind your own business. If there is some secret fault, let them alone. "God will judge His people." You have no business to meddle with it, unless He gives you some further commission than we find in the Scriptures.—Z. '13:212.

◆

The truth is purposely hidden from all not in the right attitude of heart to receive it—it is indefinite, indistinct, unintelligible to them.—Z. '02:71.

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Old Corn Gems

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God's Perfect Peace

"Like a river glorious is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.
Perfect: yet it floweth fuller every day:
Perfect: yet it groweth deeper all the way.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as he promised, perfect peace and rest.

"Hidden in the hollow of his blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand:
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as he promised, perfect peace and rest.

"Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of love.
We may trust him solely, all for us to do:
They who trust him wholly, find him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as he promised, perfect peace and rest."

—Z. '11:44.

Scatter Seeds of Kindness

"Loving words will cost but little,
Journeying up the hill of life:
But they make the weak and weary
Stronger, braver for the strife.
Do you count them only trifles?
What to earth are sun and rain?
Never was a kind word wasted;
Never one was said in vain.

"When the cares of life are many,
And its burdens heavy grow
For the ones who walk beside you,
If you love them, tell them so.

What you count of little value
Has an almost magic power,
And beneath that cheering sunshine
Hearts will blossom like a flower.

"So as up life's hill we journey,
Let us scatter all the way
Kindly words, to be as sunshine
In the dark and cloudy day.
Grudge no loving word, my brother,
As along through life you go,
To the ones who journey with you;
If you love them, tell them so."

—Z. '97:263.

Glorious is the liberty of the sons of God! Let us STAND FAST in it! And let us enjoy to the full our rest of faith: for we can rest (enjoy Sabbath) whether the world has a Sabbath or not: whether any day or no day is commanded by human law, our rest abides. It lasts seven days in each week and twenty-four hours in each day, and is not broken by physical labor, nor is it dependent on physical ease. It is a deep and lasting rest, and can be broken only by doubt—by a rejection of the basis on which it must abide, the ransom,—or by living after the flesh, and thus disturbing conscience and our relationship toward God.

How blessed is the state of all in Christ, as mature sons of God under favor, not servants nor infants under Laws! (John 15:15; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:1-6.) How blessed to us is the true rest of faith in Christ's finished work, which rest neither the world nor the Law could give, and which, from us that are free, they cannot take away. We realize that Israel's Sabbath (not only their weekly Sabbath, but also their yearly Sabbath and their Jubilee) was as far inferior to the real as was their Passover inferior to our Passover, and their sacrifices to our sacrifices, and their altar and candlestick and table of shew-bread to ours. The realities, in all these, are a thousand times grander than their shadows.—Z. '94:364.

GENERAL CONVENTION

General Convention of STANDFAST BIBLE STUDENTS at Vancouver, B.C., Saturday, Sunday and Monday, January 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1921, in the Upper Dominion Hall, 339 Pender Street West. Two meals will be provided daily for all conventioners. Reception Committee will meet all boats and trains. For further information please write Brother George H. Biddle, 816 12th Avenue West, Vancouver, B.C. Phone number, Fairmont 3443.

Those who desire to symbolize their consecration, will be glad to hear that an Immersion Service has been arranged for on the evening preceding the convention, i.e., 7:30 p.m., December 31st, 1920.

The Old Corn Gem Studies at the Convention will be taken from articles in O.C.G. 48. At the Temple study questions 91-95 will be considered.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FORTY-SEVEN

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD: AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

"Fight the Good Fight"

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called."—1 Tim. 6:12.

IF WE ARE naturally combative, we may see, or think we see, cause for a continual warfare from the cradle to the grave; and a little warping of sound judgment may give this disposition a seemingly religious turn and deceive such a one into the idea that he is fighting the "good fight," when in reality he is only cultivating a quarrelsome disposition, out of harmony with the spirit of meekness and temperance, which is a most essential feature of the Christian character. Again, many of an opposite disposition are inclined to ignore the fact that the Christian life is to be a warfare, and to regard only those Scriptures which counsel meekness, forbearance, patience, gentleness, etc.

Here are two extremes, both of which must be guarded against; and in order to help us to rightly judge and balance ourselves, the Apostle recommends us to **mark,** to observe closely those who walk circumspectly, according to the rules laid down in the Scriptures, and counsels us to beware of the influence of those who do not so walk. "For," he says, "many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you **even weeping,** that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things," which they covenanted to sacrifice.—Phil. 3:17-19.

Let us then mark some worthy examples that we may see how they ran for the prize and notice whether there is any indication that they ran successfully. First, we mark the perfect example of our Lord, our Leader and Forerunner, in whose footsteps we are invited to follow. We notice that His course in the "narrow way" of sacrifice began with an entire consecration of Himself to the will of God. His consecration was made with simplicity and sincerity, and included all that He had—"Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God!"—Heb. 10:7.

He did not say, Father, I will give Thee a tithe of My time, My service, and My means, and retain the remainder for Myself and for the pursuit of My own ambitions and plans. He did not say, Father, I have chosen this or that special work, and I trust Thy blessing will attend it. He did not say, As far as I understand Thy will, Father, I am willing to do it—with the implication that if the Father should ever ask anything too severe, or seemingly unreasonable, He might change His mind. No, His consecration was simply to the doing of the Father's will, **whatever that will might prove to be.** And then He earnestly applied Himself to the study of the Law and the Prophets, that He might know the will of God concerning Him.

When tempted to change His course He replied, "How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" (Matt. 26:54; John 18:11.) He laid aside His own will and carried out the will of God, though it cost Him privation at every step and finally a death most painful and ignominious. From this course of sacrifice He never wavered, even for a moment.

Our Lord's was a grand character for our imitation. "Yes," says one, "but our Lord was perfect and therefore could do the Father's will perfectly." Very true; we are thankful and rejoice in this, for had He not been perfect He could never have redeemed us. Yet we needed also just such an example; for however imperfectly we, like school children, may succeed in imitating the copy, we need to have a **perfect copy.**

St. Peter a Noble Soldier

But while Christ was much more to us than a perfect example for our imitation, which under our present infirmities we cannot fully duplicate, we have other examples furnished among brethren of similar infirmities with ourselves. Let us mark them and see how they followed the Master.

There was St. Peter, with his quick, impulsive nature, always loving, yet vacillating—now defending his Master at his own peril, and again disclaiming and denying Him; now boldly contending for the faith, and again compromising with Jewish prejudices, calling forth and justly meriting St. Paul's faithful reproof. Yet, rightly exercised by reproof and discipline and endeavoring to rule himself, his Christian character ripened and beautified from year to year, as evidenced by his grand and noble Epistles to the Church, written by inspiration and handed down from generation to generation for nineteen centuries; and he had many evident marks of the Lord's loving approval.

Before St. Peter had time to express in words his regret of his denial of the Lord, he was assured of forgiveness and of the continued favor of feeding our Lord's sheep; for the Lord knew the sincerity of his love and realized that through weakness and fear he had sinned. Mark, too, St. Peter's affection for his "beloved Brother Paul" (2 Pet. 3:15, 16), who had so plainly reproved and rebuked him; and for the Lord, who had said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan [adversary]; thou are an offense unto Me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." (Matt. 16:23.) Poor St. Peter! It was an uphill road for him, but he seemed to consider and appreciate his own weakness and to put his shoulder to the wheel in a more determined effort to overcome the propensities of his old nature, and to cultivate the graces of the Christian character.

But did he finally overcome? and was he accepted as one of that glorious company which shall constitute the Bride of Christ? Yes, truly; for the risen Lord Himself declared that his name is written with the others of the twelve Apostles in the very foundations of the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God. (Rev. 21:14.) See what poor, weak St. Peter gained by his meekness and patience under painful discipline!

Other Valiant Warriors

St. Paul was a stronger character by nature. He had evidently made a life business of ruling himself, though he was naturally positive and firm. When the Truth reached him he had a great advantage at once, both in his natural disposition and in his early culture, so that he could walk more firmly and steadily; and using all his energy in this direction he furnishes for our imitation a noble example of steadfastness and endurance, of untiring zeal and sincerest devotion. See and ponder well, 2 Cor. 11:23-33; 12:10, 15.

St. John was naturally loving, gentle and meek; and that very disposition would make it difficult for him to sever the many ties of human friendship which such dispositions always draw about them. Yet he was faithful to his Master, regardless of the human ties. He was a patient, faithful teacher of the doctrines of Christ, and willingly suffered banishment to the lonely Isle of Patmos for his faithful witnessing to the Truth.

Similar was the course of all the Apostles. They were bold, faithful advocates of the Truth, and examples of its power to sanctify wholly, as they gradually grew in grace, submitting themselves to its transforming influence. They were men of similar and varied dispositions like ourselves. Mark those who so run, and do likewise. God marked these, and kept a careful record of their course, judging them by their motives and endeavors; and He shows us that their course, thus judged, all their imperfections being covered by the imputed righteousness of their Leader, was acceptable to Him. They left **all** and followed Christ. Their **all** was not very much, not more, perhaps, than we have to leave; but it was their all, and so was acceptable.

St. Peter had left his fishing business and his friends to travel with the Master and learn and teach the Truth. He had thus given up his own will and his present interests to do the will of God. When he said to the Lord, "Lo, we have left all, and have followed Thee" (Mark 10:28), our Lord did not say that St. Peter's little all was not worth mentioning, but He recognized it and encouraged St. Peter to continue to sacrifice all, with the assurance that in due time he should be rewarded. (Mark 10:29, 30.) And so shall we all be, if we faint not; for faithful is He that hath called us, who also will exalt us in due time.—1 Thess. 5:24; 1 Pet. 5:6.

As we thus mark the course of the faithful ones, we see that their warfare was largely one with **themselves.** It was their endeavor to keep down their own human wills while they carried out the Divine will. Even in the case of our Lord, where the human will was **perfect,** it was a hard thing to do, as evidenced by His words, "Father, if it be **possible,** let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but **as Thou wilt.**"—Matt. 26:39. . . .

The Contending Forces

For whom do we fight—for God? for Christ? No, we answer. We **fight for ourselves.** A great mistake is made on this point by many who seem to imagine that fighting the good fight of faith is doing something **for God,** which deserves His thanks and reward. The Almighty God does not need that we should fight for **Him.** He is omnipotent, abundantly able to take care of Himself and His cause; He needs not our puny efforts. God is fighting for **us,** and assisting and encouraging us to fight the good fight of faith on **our own behalf.** It is well that this feature of the case be clearly discerned.

Against whom do we fight? We answer, our battle is not against our fellow-creatures, nor with carnal weapons; indeed, we can have large sympathy for even our most relentless foes, who, to the extent that modern civilization will permit, are ready and willing to "despitefully use and persecute" us, and to say all manner of evil against us falsely. (Matt. 5:11.) We can readily see that they are blinded in considerable measure, either by their own prejudice and passion, or by the great Adversary's delusive false doctrines and superstitions. Hence our warfare is not directed even against our enemies, and as we have opportunity we are to seek to do them good, "in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."—2 Tim. 2:25.

Hence also, when dealing with these, so far from battling with them and resisting evil with evil, our Captain has commanded that we return good for evil, gentleness for rudeness, kindness for discourtesy; and that we seek to do good to those who speak evil of us and persecute us, that thus the eyes of their understanding may be opened, and that they may be able to discern that there is such a thing as the spirit of Love, generosity, kindness, whereas they supposed all to be actuated by the same malevolent spirit of selfishness which controls themselves.

Our fight is to be against Sin—the great taskmaster which captured our race in the person of Father Adam, and has held it as slaves from then till now—mankind paying regularly for six thousand years the terrible penalty of death, with all its concomitants of sickness, pain, sorrow and trouble. Yes; this is the enemy whom we are to fight.

Indirectly, Satan is our enemy, because he it was through whose influence Father Adam first became the slave of Sin; and Satan has continued to pursue the same course, and is even now endeavoring to bring us back under the dominion of Sin, and to hold us there. We are not to forget, however, that our battle is not directly with Satan, nor are we to bring against him "a railing accusation" (Jude 9); rather, we are to say, with Michael, "The Lord rebuke thee"; and we are to await the Lord's time and the Lord's way for rebuking Satan. Nevertheless, we are to resist him; that is, we are to **resist his influence** and deceptions and endeavors to mislead us into error and into sin.

The Lord instructs us that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places [exalted positions]." (Eph. 6:12.) Satan, as the great master, or general of Sin, has largely to do with all the various influences with which we must battle. It is his cunning, his "wiles," that supervise the battle against us; and since he is a spirit being, and therefore much more intelligent than ourselves, the contest would be a very unequal one if we were without a much more powerful Spirit Leader. But we are not thus left to battle alone against superior wisdom and cunning. Our Captain, the Lord Jesus, has conquered Sin and has been glorified, and He is on our part, so that we can confidently say, Greater is He that is on our part than all they that be against us—Satan and his cohorts of evil spirits, and his deluded earthly agents and servants. **"If God be for us, who can be against us?"**—Rom. 8:31.

St. John seems to sum up the agencies through which our great captor, Sin, seeks to hold us as his slaves, or, if we have gotten free, to regain his influence over us, as **three**—the world, the flesh, the Devil. We have seen the powerful influence of the Devil, as the great general of Sin. We next notice in what sense the **world** is our opponent, and in what sense we are to battle against it.

We have just seen that we do not battle with carnal weapons, nor do we in any sense of the word battle or contest with our fellow-creatures, seeing that they are blinded by the Adversary, and really little, if to any extent, accountable for their course. Our battle is not with these. It is with "the **spirit of the world,**" its influence, that we are to do battle; it is to be fought against and resisted. The world's disposition, the mind of the world, the ambitions of the world, the motives which actuate the world, the pride of life and the deceitfulness of riches—these things, these wrong views of matters as seen from the worldly standpoint, we are to resist, to **fight** against—and it is a **daily** battle.

Finally, our battle is with the flesh—**our own** flesh. Ever since Sin captured our race, in the person of Father Adam, its slavery has been conducive to mental, moral and physical degradation. Its tendency is toward evil only, and that continually; and only as we get rid of the blinding influences, the perverted tastes, desires, ambitions, hopes and loves which sin cultivates—only in that proportion do we come to see matters in their true light, and to have even a faint glimpse of our degraded condition. But our great Captain, who is also the Chief Priest of our Profession, redeemed us from this slavery to Sin with His own precious blood. He had compassion upon us, and when we realized our deplorable condition and accepted His aid, He set us free from the yoke of Sin's slavery.

But we still have the motions of sin in our bodies—the tendencies toward sin, which have become almost second nature to us, through the long period of nearly six thousand years of slavery. So while we are now free, and with the mind are serving the Law of Christ and are accepted into His army as soldiers of the cross, to battle on the side of righteousness and Truth and goodness and purity, we nevertheless find our new selves harassed by the old perverted tastes and inclinations of our own flesh, toward the service of the old taskmaster. Not the least of our fightings, therefore, as New Creatures in Christ Jesus is against these perverted tendencies of our flesh, and the battle with these is a daily battle. With the Apostle Paul, one of the great soldiers of our war, we should be able to say, "I keep my body [my flesh and its desires] under [in subjection to my new will, my new self] lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—1 Cor. 9:27.

We enlist under the banner of our Captain; that is, from the time that we make a full consecration to Him, to fight the good fight, and to lay down our lives in His service—from that moment He reckons our flesh as dead. Our minds are renewed—alive toward God with a newness of life; and hence those motions of sin, which we are seeking to bring into absolute subjection to the will of God in Christ, are not recognized by our Lord as the will or motions of the New Creature, enlisted in His service, but merely as a part of the general enemy, sin, pursuing after and battling with us, which we are pledged to resist and to war against, and to overcome which our Lord promises grace and help in every time of need.—Heb. 4:16.

Continual Vigilance Urged

It is these great enemies in our own flesh which cause us the greatest difficulties. It is to these that Satan appeals; it is these which he seeks to encourage in their warfare against the new spirit of our minds; it is through these that the spirit of the world gains closest approach to us, and seeks to capture us and lead us back as slaves of Sin. So to speak, the New Creature in Christ is beset, surrounded on every hand with enemies, seeking our disaster and re-enslavement.

We must battle—**battle for ourselves,** battle for our own liberty, battle for victory over our own weaknesses, battle against the spirit of the world, battle against delusions and snares of the Adversary by which he seeks to make the evil things appear good and the right to appear undesirable. No wonder, then, that the Christian soldier is urged to be continually watchful; no wonder that he is urged to "put on the whole armor of God"; no wonder that he is cautioned in regard to his various and wily foes, and **especially** against those of **his own flesh.**

Thanks be to God for the great Captain of our salvation! Thanks be to God for the great armory of His Word, from which we obtain the helmet of salvation, the intellectual knowledge to protect us from the delusions of our own perverted sense, from ignorance, and from the wiles of the Adversary! Thanks be to God also for the breastplate of righteousness, the merit of Christ and His great sacrifice, compensating for our imperfections, covering our vitals and securing thereby our life—eternal life!

Thanks be to God also for the shield of faith, of trust, of confidence in Him who has bought us, in realization that He who has begun the good work in us is both able and willing to complete it! Since God so loved us while we were yet the slaves of sin, and redeemed us from bondage with the precious blood of Christ, much more does He now love us, and much more is He prepared to aid us now that we have, by His grace, become free from Sin, and become the servants of righteousness! Thanks be to God also for the sandals, the **preparation** to endure hardness patiently, which the Truth gives, protecting us in the walks of life, and from the sharp animosities of the world! Thanks be to God also for the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of His Truth, as a defense by which we can resist the Adversary and come off conquerors, through Him who loved us and bought us!

Previous to St. Paul's exhortation to the faithful few, to fight the good fight of faith, he gives the very wholesome advice that we lay entirely aside from us the weights of our former earthly cares, etc. —pride, ambition, discontent, money-loving and such-like things. We cannot grasp or hold the treasures of this life, and at the same time run successfully for the heavenly prize—"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon"; and "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."—Matt. 6:24; James 1:8.

Let us then take St. Paul's counsel—flee these earthly things and, following after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life as joint-heirs with Christ in the glory of victory shortly to be granted. If, after we have consecrated our all to God, we turn back to mind and seek earthly things, and glory in their possession, we are really glorying in our shame; and the end of such glory, if pursued to the end, is destruction. "See that ye walk circumspectly," not minding earthly, but heavenly things, and not yielding to the temptations of those who walk otherwise. Then we also shall be setting an example for others, worthy of their imitation.

"O watch and pray! for thou hast foes to fight—
Foes which alone thou canst not overcome;
Watching and prayer will keep thine armor bright;
Soon will thy toils be o'er, thy victory won.
O watch and pray! the Lord is at the door.
O watch and keep thy garments spotless, pure!"

—Z. '12:304-308.

The Dark Gethsemane Hour

Matthew 26:36-46.

"The Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."—V. 45.

AFTER the Master and his disciples, as Jews, had celebrated the Passover Supper and after he had subsequently instituted the Memorial of his death, with the bread and the cup, and after Judas had gone out to betray him, Jesus and the remaining eleven left the upper room in Jerusalem, crossed the city to the gate, and thence crossed the Valley Kedron and ascended the sloping side of Mt. Olivet toward the Garden of Gethsemane. The word Gethsemane signifies oil-press. Tradition has it that this Garden belonged to the family of which the Apostles John and James were members, and that for this reason the Lord and his disciples were privileged to feel themselves at home there. St. Mark, the writer of one of the Gospels, but not one of the Apostles, is credited with having been a member of the same family. One of the accounts of the arrest of the Master tells that amongst those who followed after him was a young man wrapped with a sheet, and who fled naked when some members of the band attempted to lay hold of him. That young man, tradition says, years afterwards was known as St. Mark.

This was the most memorable night of the Master's experience. He knew perfectly the meaning of every feature of the Passover. He knew that he was the Lamb of God, antitypically, whose death was to be accomplished on the following day by crucifixion. Yet his thoughts were for his dear disciples. He must give them final words of encouragement and instruction. And so he did. Three chapters of St. John's Gospel record the incidents of the intervening time between the leaving of the upper room and the arriving at Gethsemane, the place of the oil-press. "And Judas also, who betrayed him, knew the place, for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples." (John 18:2.) In St. John 14 the Master told his disciples about the place he would go to prepare for them, but that he would send the Spirit of Truth to be their Comforter, and it would show them things to come. In the fifteenth chapter he gave them the parable of the Vine and the Branches, and assured them that no longer should they be servants, but friends. "For all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." In the sixteenth chapter he explained to them that persecutions must be expected, if they would share his sufferings and be prepared to share his glory.

A little while and they would not see him; then again a little while and they would see him. The entire period of his absence from the Divine standpoint, as compared to eternity, would be but a little while. Then, by virtue of the resurrection "change," they would see him, because made like him. "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "These things I have given unto you that in me ye might have peace." In the seventeenth chapter is recorded his wonderful prayer to the Father on behalf of his followers—not for the Apostles only, but for all those also who would believe on him through their word.

In the Garden of Gethsemane

Thus discoursing, they reached the Garden, or olive-yard, where the press for extracting the oil from the olives was located. Somewhere near the entrance eight of the disciples were bidden to remain watching while Jesus, with the specially beloved Peter, James and John, went a little farther. And then, realizing the impossibility of even his dearest friends appreciating his sorrowful condition, he went still farther alone to speak to the Father. The disciples, perplexed, astounded, by the things that they had heard from his lips, did not comprehend the true situation. They evidently thought that there must still be something parabolic in his utterances. They would indeed watch with him, but they were weary and sank into slumber. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak.

If some have queried why the Master preferred to be alone in prayer so frequently, the answer is, "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me." (Isa. 63:3.) His disciples and followers loved him dearly. Still he was alone, because he alone had been begotten of the holy Spirit. His followers could not feel so blessed nor be Spirit-begotten until after his sacrifice had been finished nor until he would appear in the presence of God for them to apply his merit imputedly to them; to permit them to join with him sacrificially in the sufferings of this present time, that they might share with him also in the glories to follow.

St. Peter, referring to the foregoing experience of our Lord, declares that he offered up strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in respect to that which he feared. Why did he fear? Do not all humanity face death, and some of them with great courage and some with bravado? Ah, there is a vast difference between the Master's standpoint and ours as respects death. We were born dying. We never knew perfect life. We have always known that there is no escape from death. It was different with him. His experiences on the spirit plane before coming into the world were all in association with life, perfection of life. "In him was life" uncontaminated, because he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners; his life came not from Adam.

He knew that in his perfection he had a right to life, if he would live in perfect accordance with the Divine requirements. But he knew also that by special Covenant with God, "a Covenant by sacrifice," he had agreed to the surrender of all his earthly rights and to allow his life to be taken from him. The Father had promised him a great reward of glory, honor and immortality through resurrection from the dead, but this was dependent upon his absolute obedience in every particular—in word, in thought, in deed. The question was, Had he been absolutely loyal to God in every particular? If not, death would mean to him an eternal extinction of being; not only the loss of heavenly glory promised as a reward, but the loss of everything. Can we wonder that he did not understand? The hour seemed so dark, and he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful." He knew that he was to die. He knew that death was necessary. But here, now, looming up before him on the morrow was a shameful execution as a blasphemer, as a criminal, as a violator of Divine law. Could it be possible that in anything, even slightly, he had taken to himself the honor due to the Father? Could it be possible that in any degree he had held back, even in his mind, from full obedience to the Father's will? Did this crucifixion as a criminal possibly mean the loss of Divine favor? Was it necessary that he should die thus? Might not this cup of ignominy pass? So he prayed in a great agony. And although the older Greek manuscripts do not contain the statement that he sweat great drops of blood, medical science tells us that such an experience would not have been at all impossible in a nervous, strained, mental agony. But we note the beautiful simplicity of the statement with which his prayer concluded—"Nevertheless, my Father, not my will, but thy will, be done."

How childlike and beautiful the faith and trust, even amidst strenuous agitation! St. Paul says that he was heard in the thing which he feared. How? God's answer came by angelic hands. An angel appeared and ministered to him—ministered to his necessity. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14.) We are not informed in what words this heavenly ministry was expressed to the Master in his lowliness and sorrow, but we do know that it must have been with full assurance of the Heavenly Father's favor and sympathy and love. He was heard in respect to the things which he feared. He received the assurance that he was well-pleasing to the Father; that he had been faithful to his Covenant, and that he would have the resurrection promised.

From that moment onward the Master was the calmest of all who had any association with the great events of that night and the following day. Officers, servants, Sanhedrin, priests, Herod and his men of war, Pilate and his soldiers, and the shouting rabble—all were excited, all were distressed. Jesus only was calm. This was because he had the Father's assurance that all was well between them. As this blessed assurance gave the Master courage, so his followers since have found that, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" If we have the peace of God ruling in our hearts, it is beyond all human comprehension.

Judas the Ungrateful Apostate

The world is full of sadly disappointing characters. In many things we all fail. Selfishness, meanness, perversity, pride, etc., mark the human family most woefully. But withal, can anyone find anything more reprehensible than the ingrate who would betray his best friend?

The world is of one opinion respecting such characters as that of Judas. And although he is a noted example he is by no means an exception; **there are many.** Some of them live today. But whoever can see the meanness of such a disposition with a reasonably good focus will surely be saved from manifesting such a character, however mean might be his disposition. The man, who could sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver is justly in contempt with all humanity. Nor was it merely the thirty pieces that influenced the ingrate. Rather it was pride. He had thought to be associated with the Master in an earthly throne. He had set his faith upon this expectation. Now that same Master explained more fully that the throne was not yet in sight; that it belongs to an age to follow this, and is to be given only to those who prove themselves loyal and faithful unto death. In the mind of Judas the matter took not the wisest and best way. Holding the Great Teacher in contempt, the deceived one probably intended that the delivery should be merely a temporary one—a lesson to the Master not to talk that way, not to carry matters too far—an incentive to him, compelling him to exert his power for the resistance of those who sought his life and thus, in exalting himself, make good to his disciples the share in the Kingdom which he had promised, or, failing of this, to wreck the entire project. Alas, the love of money, the love of power puff up and make delirious some who become intoxicated with ambition. How necessary that all the Lord's followers remember the message, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased!" "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—Matt. 23:12; 1 Pet. 5:6; Z. '10:348-350.

Such Shall Not Inherit the Kingdom of God

Galatians 5:15-26.

Golden Text:—"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

ST. PAUL was a practical man, not merely a theorist; he brought his teaching down to a practical level which his readers could comprehend. Today's Study is one of these. Like all of St. Paul's epistles and entreaties, it is addressed to the Church, to those who have turned aside from the broad road of selfishness and worldliness, to walk the narrow way, in the footsteps of Jesus, and thereby to become joint-heirs with Jesus in his Messianic Kingdom, which is shortly to bless the world.

The Christian has, so to speak, stepped out of his old self and become a New Creature, a Spirit being, which merely resides in the flesh and has interests that are distinctly separate and often antagonistic thereto. The Apostle urges these to walk in the spirit; that is to say, to let their daily course of life be in accord with their new nature. So doing, they will resist and not fulfil the desires of the flesh. Why? Because they will realize that there is an antagonism of interests as between the desires of the flesh and their desires as New Creatures. The two are at warfare, the one desiring against the other. There may be a truce for a time, but there will never be peace between them. Our interests as New Creatures are along spiritual lines, while our depraved appetites and tastes go in the opposite direction. Hence the Apostle said, "Ye cannot do the things that ye would!" As New Creatures you would follow in the footsteps of your Master, perfectly, but having fallen flesh, you cannot do this! You can only hobble after him at very most. But if we take this position and become his followers, we will be no longer under judgment according to the flesh, but will be judged as New Creatures, perfect in will—rendering the best obedience to righteousness we are **capable of,** under our handicap of imperfect human organism.

The Fruitage of the Fallen Flesh

In order that none might make a mistake as to what would constitute the desires of the flesh, the Apostle recites them and declares that they are manifest or openly discernible, namely: "fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revelings and such like, of the which I forewarn you, that they which practise such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." These are works of the fallen flesh and antagonistic to righteousness. All of God's people are to resist them, if they would not lose his favor. They have the seeds of all these iniquitous things in their flesh, received by heredity;

but their minds, their wills, have been changed, converted, turned around, to righteousness—to the doing of the will of God. As New Creatures they must not practise the fleshly things, else they will not grow in the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit and will not be fit for the Kingdom.

The Apostle does not here say that if anyone were overtaken in a fault and lost his temper, for instance, and got into strife, that this would bar him forever from the Kingdom. He might, indeed, through tears and prayers and Divine forgiveness, come back into harmony with God and subsequently become a valued soldier of the Cross and follower of the Lamb. But if any **practise** such things they should know that they are developing and strengthening a character contrary to the one which God will approve—they are going backward and not forward. Let us note the difference between an accidental slip with a penitent recovery, and a wilful practising of a wrong course. **Alas! how many Christians have the evidence in themselves that they will not inherit the Kingdom of God!**

The Fruitage of the Holy Spirit

If the Apostle led us into a tangled wildwood of human selfishness, thorns and thistles, as a specimen of the fruitage of the fallen flesh, he next leads us in the opposite direction, and shows us the fruits and flowers of sweet odor which belong to the Garden of the Lord. He tells us that these delightful fruits of the Spirit should more and more be cultivated, and should be developed to perfection in our hearts, and, as far as possible, should overrun and cover and choke out the imperfections of our flesh. The fruits of this garden are all the fruits of the Spirit of God—all such as he originally planted in man and which have become vitiated through sin—all such as he now has implanted afresh and would develop in the hearts of his sanctified ones. The fruits of the Spirit, which should be manifest in all of the followers of Jesus in more or less perfection are these: "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

The Apostle explains that those who have become Christ's followers have crucified the flesh with the passions and desires thereof. They have voluntarily agreed that they will live contrary to the emotions and desires of the fallen flesh. He urges, If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk! It is the Spirit of God which has quickened us and which ultimately is to perfect us. But it can perfect us only if we are led by it and walk in its ways. Otherwise we will not be fit for a place in the Kingdom, whatever other place in God's arrangements we may have. One of the most dangerous besetments of the Christian is vanity. It leads to more trouble, provokes more quarrels and envyings than is generally supposed. If we are walking after the Spirit of our Master, it will mean that instead of being vainglorious we will be meek, humble, teachable. And **only such** will eventually be ready for the glory, honor and immortality which God will bestow upon the faithful.—Z. '10: 302, 303.

Reporting From Two Viewpoints

Numbers 13:17-20, 23-33.

Golden Text.—"The Lord is with us; fear them not."—Num. 14:9.

THE journey of about 160 miles "through the terrible wilderness" toward Canaan consumed about three months, due probably to the largeness of the camp, for modern travelers have covered the distance in eleven days. Finally they reached Kadesh-Barnea, on the border of the promised land, with the hills of the latter in full view. It was here that Moses smote the rock, contrary to the divine command, and today the place has abundant springs of water and is a regular oasis. In harmony with the divine arrangement it was proposed that they go up immediately to possess the land, but caution and fear suggested that first spies be sent out, that they might have a better knowledge of the real value of the land God had given them and also a better knowledge of the difficulties to be encountered in taking possession of it. With them, as with Christians today, the opportunity was afforded of doubting the beneficence of the divine arrangement, doubting the wisdom and love of God, and conjecturing the impossibility of taking possession of the land and the probability that even then they should find it far less attractive than the Lord at the mouth of Moses had reported.

The request of the people that the land be spied and reported on before its conquest was begun was acceded to by Moses. Twelve spies were selected, representing the twelve tribes—prominent men in whose judgment the people might have confidence. Apparently these went forth in two companies: one under Joshua made a tour of the entire country from the southern part to Jericho at the north, some 300 miles. The other band under Caleb made a shorter journey, going only so far as the valley of Eschol near Hebron. Caleb was accordingly the first to report (Numbers 13:30; 14:24), while Joshua's report came in later (Numbers 14:6, 7). The spies were commissioned to gather information respecting the fruitfulness of the land and the desirability of the country and the character of its inhabitants, and whether they dwelt permanently in walled cities, or in movable camps like the Arabs. Two reports were returned, and in most particulars they were very much alike, telling that the land was good and fruitful and desirable, but that it would be difficult to conquer; that the inhabitants dwelt in high-walled cities, which were well nigh impregnable, and that some of the people were of great stature. Although there were but few of these giants, their fame was evidently far reaching, and the spies declared with exaggeration that in their presence they felt like grasshoppers. The majority advised against any attempt to take possession of the land, and discouraged the people, leading them to believe that it would be an utterly hopeless task for them to undertake to drive out the Canaanites, the Amalekites, the Amorites, the Hittites and the Jebusites, who had thorough possession. The minority report by Caleb and Joshua differed little from the other, except that they expressed full confidence that Israel under divine guidance and by divine aid would be fully able to conquer all the difficulties of the situation.

We cannot wonder that the people were greatly disheartened from the very beginning: they were not a warlike, but a pastoral people. Indeed with the exception of the battle which Abraham waged for the recovery of Lot and his family, and the battle a year before in the wilderness with the Amalekites, the Israelites had no experience in war and quite evidently were unprepared for such a contest as lay before them if they entered Canaan and attempted to take possession. We must admit, therefore, that the report of the ten spies that the Israelites were not capable of taking possession was in many respects a wise and just one, and the people apparently were justified in accepting it. The thing lacking was faith. They should have believed God, and have followed explicitly his leading; they should have said, Greater is he who is on our part than all they that be against us, and while we are under his direction we are able to do all things through his strengthening power. However, it should not surprise us that this people under all the circumstances were unable to exercise such a faith in God. Rather we might say that antitypical Israel alone might be expected to have such a triumphant faith—nor do we find that very many Spiritual Israelites today possess faith to such a degree. Indeed we should not forget that the failure of Natural Israel and the divine dealings with them in consequence were more in the sense of typical illustrations for Spiritual Israel than as real condemnations on Natural Israel. We cannot think that God expected much more of those people than was manifested in their course. Of Spiritual Israel, however, much may reasonably be expected.

The Majority in the Wrong

How did the people receive the two reports? Almost unanimously they decided that they had been misled, that their best course was to return to Egypt and proffer their services again to the Egyptian taskmasters. They decided that their coming out of Egypt was a mistake, that the journey through the wilderness was wasted time, and that they now stood in a hopeless position, a people without a country. They proposed to select a leader to lead them back to Egypt, and threatened Caleb and Joshua with stoning for trying to perpetuate the misleading of Moses, which they seemed to have been willing to forgive as an error of judgment. At this juncture, however, the Lord intervened, and from the bright display of his presence over the Tabernacle there went forth a judgment against some of the leaders, especially the ten spies who gave the faithless report and stirred up the people to resent the divine leading which they had previously followed. The lesson was a severe one, a plague amongst the people evidencing divine disfavor, and they were turned back again to wander in the wilderness for the remainder of forty years, a year for each day consumed in the spying of the land. The divine decree was that all the men of Israel over twenty years of age were to perish in the wilderness during those forty years of national disfavor—that not one of them was ever to enter the promised land except the two who gave the good report, Caleb and Joshua.

The commotion amongst the people incident to this report must have been great. Moses himself endorsed the report of Caleb and Joshua, and urged the people to obedience to God, as we read:—

"Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them. Jehovah, your God, who goeth before you, he will fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes, and in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that Jehovah thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place. Yet in this thing ye did not believe Jehovah thy God, who went before thee in the way, to seek you out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night to show you in what way you should go, and in the cloud by day."—Deut. 1: 29-33.

But the people in bitterness of disappointment cried out, "Would to God that we had died in the land of Egypt, or would to God that we had died in the wilderness. Wherefore hath the Lord brought us into this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey. Were it not better for us to return to Egypt?"

Then Joshua and Caleb exhorted the congregation, saying, "The land which we passed through to spy it out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delight in us, then will he bring us into this land and give it unto us; a land which floweth with milk and honey, only rebel not against the Lord nor fear ye the people of the land."

Spiritual Israel's Similar Tests

Applying the lesson to Spiritual Israelites we find many correspondencies. . . . Perhaps it would not be amiss to suppose that the twelve spies represent the whole number of the Lord's people who in the present life enter into covenant relationship to the Lord and experience a measure of his rest. All agree that the rest of faith is a glorious one, that its fruitage is grand, and samples are presented to the people. A small minority, however, give a proper report of the possibility of Christian living—the possibility of being overcomers of the world, of fighting a good fight in the name and strength of the Lord, the possibility of entering into all the glorious things which God hath provided for them that love him. The majority, the Great Company, hold back, fail to appropriate the promises, fail to trust the Lord, and **their influence is proportionately an evil one upon others** with whom they have influence. Thus at the present time few by faith enter into the blessings and privileges that belong to the Spiritual Israelite, and these few are the only ones who will enter into the heavenly Canaan to take actual possession by and by; the others fail of the blessing and joy of faith in the present time, and will fail of the highest blessing in the future, whatever portion they may obtain under the Lord's grace.

Mr. Spurgeon told a story of a man who was invited to come into his orchard to eat some of his fruit. He declined because he said he had picked up some apples from the roadside that fell from those trees, and they were poor and bitter. The owner replied that those trees were there on purpose, so that the boys would not be attracted into the orchard to steal, but assured him that in the orchard proper to which he invited him were delicious apples. As those apple trees on the outside gave not a proper sample or representation of the orchard, so many Christians give to the world a very unsatisfactory sample of the blessings of the Lord and the fruits of the Spirit, and in some respects bear false witness and hinder the outflow of the blessings of the Lord toward mankind in general during this age. Thank God that the time is coming when under the leadership of the Joshua and Caleb class the whole people—all who will accept the Lord and have confidence in him—may be brought into the antitypical Canaan and assisted to take possession of all the rich favors which God has promised to them that love and obey him.

"Unbelief never gets beyond the difficulties, the cities, the walls, the giants. It is always preferring them, dwelling on them, pitting them against its own resources. Faith, on the other hand, though it never minimizes the difficulties, looks them steadily in the face, turns from them and looks into the face of God, and counts on him. This is what the people failed to do, and for this they lost Canaan."—F. B. Meyer.

"Oh, how many a glorious record
Had the guardian angel kept!
Had I done instead of doubted,
Had I warred instead of wept!"

"I Can Do All Things Through Christ Who Strengtheneth Me"

There are two important lessons for Spiritual Israelites to learn: (1) Their own inefficiency—their own inability to meet the trials, the difficulties, the hindrances in their way. As the Apostle says, We cannot do the things that we would. But our extremity is God's opportunity, and his encouraging words are, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in your weakness." The Lord could have armed and equipped the hosts of Israel in some miraculous manner, making them invulnerable to the attacks of their enemies, and giving them courage for their ordeal; but this was not his plan. He wished to develop in them the necessary faith, trust, obedience, for, "without faith it is impossible to please God." Thus in Natural Israel was illustrated the divine proceeding in Spiritual Israel. God could miraculously give us powers of mind and of body which would make us superior to every outward circumstance; but instead of so doing he merely justifies us by faith, and tells us to reckon ourselves as complete, perfect, because of the imputation of our Redeemer's merit. From this standpoint of faith all the battles of Spiritual Israel are won or lost. "According to thy faith be it unto you." Those, therefore, who can and will exercise full faith, full confidence in all of the divine promises may go from victory to victory, from blessing to blessing, from joy to joy, from one attainment to another, and have a glorious victory in the end over the world, the flesh and the Adversary, through the imputed merit and continued assistance of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

To this class the giants of opposition and despair lose their power, even as did Goliath before the slingstone of David. The pebble from the brook—the message from the divine Word—vanquishes the enemy's power to those who have the sling of faith. To these the fortresses of sin are not so strong as to be invulnerable, unassailable: entrenched depravity is recognized as being subject to divine power, and when attacked in the name and strength of the Lord and encompassed repeatedly with prayer, finally its strong walls fall down as did those of Jericho. So may depraved appetites and sinful desires be thoroughly conquered so far as our hearts are concerned, though the traces thereof may continue to some extent in our mortal flesh—reminders not only of the weaknesses of the fallen nature, but also of the triumphs of the New Mind under the leadership of Jesus.

As these victories of faith progress the fruits of the victory become ours. The grapes of Eschol, the figs, and all the plenty of the land flowing with milk and honey but feebly picture the riches of grace and fruitage of the Spirit which accrue to those who in the name of the Lord gain the victories of faith over the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Of these fruits and graces the Apostle speaks, naming meekness, gentleness, patience, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love. And the assurance of the Word is that if we do these things, if we maintain this good fight of faith as New Creatures, we not only shall enjoy the spiritual refreshment, but eventually "an entrance shall be administered unto us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Peter 1:11; Z. '07:250-252.

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None can know the character of the heart, whether it be a new heart or merely that of the natural man or woman who has learned politeness, morality, etc. The only way in which we are permitted to judge each other is by the outward fruitage. If the Spirit of the Lord dwell within, the fruitage must be good, helpful to others. That human being must be a blessing in his home, in his community even as Jesus was, whether his character, his goodness, be acknowledged by others in general or not. The fruits of these people of God are the fruits of holiness, meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, brotherly-kindness, selfsacrifice in the interest of others and especially in the service of God and His Truth.—Z. '14:221.

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Like the fabled halcyon, which built its nest and brought forth its birdlings in the midst of the sea, the true child of God can be at rest even amidst the billows and storms of life, and can prosper as a New Creature and accomplish all the good pleasure of God's will.—Z. '16:183.

"Think It Not Strange"

> "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—1 Pet. 4:12, 13.

PERHAPS few have learned to value the discipline of the Lord as did the faithful Apostle who wrote these words. While he as well as others realized that no affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but rather grievous, yet knowing the ministry of such discipline, and recognizing it as an additional evidence of sonship to God, he rejoiced in being a partaker of it.

But why is it that fiery trials must come to us? Is there no way of gaining the crown without these crosses? No, there is not: for if ye receive not the discipline of trial whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons: for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? Trials of faith and patience and love and endurance are as necessary to our development and our fitting for the high position to which we are called, as are the instructions of the divine Word and the special manifestations of divine grace. The blessed sunshine and shower have their benign influence, but none the less the cloud and the storm; but we need ever to bear in mind that the cloud has its silver lining, and that God is in the whirlwind and in the storm.

Like water upon the parched earth, and like sunshine to vegetation after winter snows, so the message of divine truth comes to us and with it the blessed realization of divine favor. In the joy of our new-found treasure we are apt to think at first that we have actually entered the Beulah land of joy and peace where sorrow and trial can nevermore come to us. But no; there are sorrows ahead and trials beyond, and you will need all the strength which the truth can give and all the blessed influences that divine grace can impart to enable you to endure faithfully to the end.

But do not stop to worry about the trials until they come; only remember the Apostle's words—"Think it not strange," when they do come. They come to prove you and to strengthen your character and to cause the principles of truth and righteousness to take deep root in your heart. They come like fiery darts from our great enemy, Satan, whose wrath against the children of light is permitted to manifest itself in various ways; but his darts cannot injure those who securely buckle on the divinely provided armor of truth and righteousness. "Wherefore," says the Apostle, "take unto you the whole armor of God, . . . above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."—Eph. 6:13-17.

The Christian life is thus set forth as a warfare—a warfare, "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6:12.) In other words, as Christians imbued with the spirit of our Master, we find the principles of truth and righteousness which we have espoused to be at variance with the whole present order of things, which is to a very large extent under the control of "the prince of this world"—Satan. And when sin is thus so inwrought throughout the whole social fabric of the present age; and not only so, but when we also find the flesh, our own old nature, in harmony with it, we see into what close quarters we must come with the enemy, and what a hand to hand and life-long struggle it must needs be. Yet our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual, and the Apostle says **they are mighty** for the pulling down of the strongholds of error and iniquity.—2 Cor. 10:4, 5.

When, therefore, the fiery trials and darts from the enemy come upon you, be ready as an armed soldier of the cross to meet and withstand them. If you run away from them, you are a coward, and not worthy to be called a soldier.—Z. '94:389, 390.

Does the Church Participate in the Ransom and in the Sin-Offering?

IN CONSIDERING this question we must view the Church from two sides. If we think of the Church in connection with the presentation of their bodies living sacrifices to God, we would say that **they are not** participators in the Ransom, for they have nothing that they could give as a share in the Ransom—they are **imperfect.** If we view the question from the other standpoint—that the Church are spirit beings and as spirit beings are members of the Body of Christ, one with Him who is their Head—they would as members of The Christ share with Him in everything He does, just as the **hand** shares with the **head;** for the human body is the figure that the Bible gives us, in speaking of The Christ. The **merit** by which the Ransom-price is effective with God was in **Jesus** alone. It was that **merit** which we **did not possess** when we presented ourselves to God in consecration. But when we were **accepted by Jesus** as disciples, He imputed **His own merit** to us, and made us part of His own sacrifice. He was at the same time making us part of that which He is to give to God for the sins of the whole world, at the close of this Age when the Church, His Body, is complete and glorified together with Him.

We are to remember, however, that none of the **human** remains; for at the time we were made members of the Body of Christ we had become dead as human beings, by the surrender of our wills. Because we are New Creatures, old things have passed away and all things have become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17.) We are to remember, also, that it is not the **spiritual Body** of Christ that is sacrificed, even as it was not the **spiritual** Head that was sacrificed. The Sin-offering was **the flesh.** And it was **Jesus' flesh** that constituted the Ransom—**not our flesh.** But now that this Ransom-price has been placed in the hands of Justice as a **deposit,** whose title is possessed by Jesus, we are joint-sharers with Him in this possession by reason of our relationship to Him and our interest in everything that He possesses. Thus the Church becomes a sharer in this Ransom-price, because as His Bride we are His joint-heirs; and we are to be associated with Him in giving to the world the benefits of that Ransom-price.

We do not make the Sin-offering any more than we do the **ransoming.** We are **merely accepted** by the High Priest. This acceptance is shown in His sacrificing of us as human beings after He has imputed to us His merit. And in this presentation at the end we shall share as New Creatures. It is not the offering of anything the New Creature has in itself; but the New Creature having participated with Jesus in the crucifying of the flesh, each of these will be associated with Him also when the merit is presented to the Father.—Z. '16:109, 110.

What Constitutes Evil-Speaking

THE Apostle Paul says, "Speak evil of no man"; he does not say, Speak evil of no creed. Some of the creeds should be very evilly spoken of! It would do the people good who are bound by them. He does not say that we are not to speak evil of an evil principle, but brings the matter down to personality. The Bible speaks of mankind as evil-thinking, evil-speaking, evil-doing; they, are all under the ban in this sense. And to say that the whole world are sinners, is not speaking **evil**; for all recognize the fact. It is true, and every person ought to know that all men are sinners; sin prevails.

But when we come down to personalities, we are getting on dangerous ground. Jesus said that the Pharisees were hypocrites and whited sepulchres. He did not thus address an **individual,** but He spoke evil of the **system,** and of a **class.** So if we call attention to pickpockets, we are not necessarily casting reproach on any one in our neighborhood. But when we single out an individual and speak evil of him, we are on wrong ground, according to the Scriptures, except as a matter of necessity. If you know of a pickpocket, the proper course is to have him arrested. If you know that at one time a certain person **was** a pickpocket, it does not necessarily follow that he is one **now**; he might have reformed. . . .

To keep up a reproach and brand one because of certain misconduct earlier in life is not right. It is not right to hold a reproach against any one, and hinder him from an honest course in the future. We would better say, Now you are a free man, and I believe you are determined to do right. The effect of this would be good—to let him see that some one who knew about the past was willing to help him. But if he gave no assurance of doing right, then we would feel free to put others on guard against him. If he were willing to do right, we should co-operate with him in any way possible.

The World Full of Evil-Speaking

There is no doubt that there is much evil-speaking; the world is full of it. A man in business will often say of another, I could trust that man about as far as you could throw an elephant by the tail—a graphic way of saying how much confidence he has in him. Another expression is, I would not trust **him** with even a cellar full of cold water! The world has not come into the School of Christ; it is the Church, therefore, that is especially instructed to speak evil of no man. Of course, it is natural for our fallen flesh to "dodge" nearly everything, and to try to think out some way by which we could justify ourselves in saying something unfavorable of another; and it seems that even the Lord's people have often "edged around" to see what excuse they could find for speaking evil and yet not feel condemned.

The Human Heart Very Deceitful

It is to be assumed and presumed that every child of God has a heart that is desirous of doing the Lord's will, and that, therefore, none of them would **desire** to do that which is **contrary** to the Lord's will. But there is something in the fallen human heart which is very deceitful—determined to do the thing it used to do in the world. We have known people of the world who think nothing whatever of telling anything and everything about people. They will often say it in a whisper, knowing that the person to whom they tell it will whisper it to somebody else in five minutes. Even if they are not sure that it is true, it is too "good" to keep! They want others to share such a fine thing! They roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongue for awhile, and then hasten to spit it out to others, that they may help to carry it on! Evil burns to get out.

Well, it would not be wrong to tell the truth about a person, says one. Yes, it **would be wrong!** But, if I do not tell John Smith that Mary Jones owes me a bill, **he** may trust her. I must tell it to others because she may get in debt to **them.** I will not say very much: I will just shrug my shoulder and nod my head and say, You would better look out, or you will get bitten! And so if it were only a dime the person owes, she would be done a thousand dollars worth of injury.

Do we know something that we could tell, and is it "aching" to get out? If so, let us go before the Lord in prayer, and earnestly strive to follow out the injunction of the Apostle Paul: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and **evil-speaking**, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Ephesians 4:31, 32.

Important to the Lord's People

We believe that this matter of evil-speaking, dear brethren, is one of the difficulties of Christians—to know how and when and where to hold our peace in respect to the reputation of others.

Evil-Speaking Defined

Of course there are people who are foolish; they would tell unfavorable things about themselves as well as about others. But most people would not be willing to tell anything disparaging about themselves, and we should stop and think. Shall I say anything detrimental about **anybody?** If the circumstances were changed, if I were in his place and he were in my place, would I like him to tell this about me?

But how would it be if we saw a man picking another man's pocket? Then we would feel fully justified in taking all the steps necessary for his arrest, because we would think that it would be the very best thing for that man as well as for others. We would think it right to shout, **Pick-pocket! Pick-pocket!** and have him arrested.

So far as we can determine, evil-speaking means the saying of anything that would be injurious to another, in a way or under circumstances that, if it applied to ourself, we would think unkind and injurious. In certain instances we have known of one who had been doing wrong, and we have sent him word that if he pursued such a course, we would believe it our duty to take some action in the matter; but that if he assured us he would abandon his course, we would do nothing. In this way, in several cases, the person has been kept from doing harm to others; and we were saved from openly making reference to the matter about which we knew, and which, perhaps, no other person in the world knew.

We need the wisdom from on High. And we believe that this attitude represents a **necessary** development of Christian character. If we really desire the good of **our** neighbor, and our own good, if we desire to honor him as we would wish him to honor us, then we must follow the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you."

Much evil-speaking would be avoided by remembering the following bright little jingle clipped from a secular Journal. The sentiment is wholesome and Scriptural:

"Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can."

St. Paul gives the same thought briefly, in the words, "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men."—Galatians 6:10; Z. '14:167, 168.

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CHURCH NOW JUDGES ALONG CERTAIN LINES

The Scriptures instruct us that now the Church should judge its members along certain lines. We are not to judge one another's **hearts**. On the contrary, we are to take one another's word for their heart condition. But we are to judge one another's **conduct.**

In our judging, we are to remember the lines along which the Lord would have us judge. The Lord will be with the good, we may be sure of that fact. But we are to deal kindly, affectionately. "Be kindly affectioned one toward another, with brotherly love." In dealing with one another, **in proportion as we lay down hard, inflexible lines of judgment, in that proportion we would be fixing the guage of the Lord's judgment with us.** "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." With what allowance we mete out to others, the Lord will judge us. We are to be sympathetic with others, and to remember that all need mercy and forgiveness, even as we hope for these for ourselves.

Whoever has a duty to perform, let him not fear but be courageous; and if doing unpleasant tasks which are necessary, let us perform them in a kindly manner, both justly and lovingly. Let us not fear man, but rather fear the Lord, and be intent on pleasing Him.—Z. '14:72.

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Where the spirit of joy and thankfulness reigns pride finds no place, but each, in lowliness of mind and in the fear of God, submits himself to the other for helpful, loving counsel or criticism, to the end that so, by mutually taking heed to the word of the Lord and seeking to measure up to all its requirements, the bride of Christ may make herself ready for the marriage.—Z. '93:13.

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Now is the time for standing the tests and being full of faith and confidence in the Lord. Now is the time for standing the test of truth, accepting it as from the Lord and lifting our hearts in gratitude. Now is the time for understanding the will of the Captain, following his example, and imitating him and laying down our lives for the brethren, and as sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God and our reasonable service. Now is the time for declaring our confidence in him who called us, who gave us the light and who has privileged us to be his little flock. Let us be faithful to our tests and opportunities and thus be accounted worthy of a share in the service and the glory that shall follow.—Z. '02:349.

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Those who today make an attack upon the Truth only cause its beauties and harmonies to be the more clearly discerned by those whose eyes of understanding are opened and whose hearts are in a proper attitude to appreciate the Truth.—Z. '04:42.

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Like John the Baptist at the first advent, we must expect to decrease here, while the Church Triumphant, on the other side the vail, will be on the increase.—Z. '96:168.

A SUBTLE TEST

The Lord's people spend and are being spent in His service, by attending meetings, by holding meetings and in various ways, according to opportunity. They are living separate from the world—distinct lives, lives of consecration. The world now has an eight-hour day. The Lord's faithful people would, on the contrary, make theirs a sixteen-hour day. But all these present-day conditions constitute perils. For us to do what others do, and to devote to the Lord's service only what the world considers a reasonable day's work, would not be fulfilling our Covenant of Sacrifice at all. Those who seek merely to do right, and to put in eight hours or so a day faithfully, after the manner of the world, will be judged from this standpoint. They are not fulfilling the conditions of the Covenant of Sacrifice.

But the Little Flock will serve the Lord with such delight that they will scarcely know how to cease their efforts. They recognize that their bodies are fully consecrated to the Lord, and they are daily putting them to death in a reasonable, rational manner. In view of these perilous times, let us each ask himself the question, To which class do I belong?—Z. '14:71.

SELF-SEEKING TO BE DEPRECATED

Each is to be content with what the Lord's Providence opens up to him. He is not to be self-seeking. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 18:14.) He that exalteth **himself** is not to be exalted by the **Church**; for he will not be exalted by the Lord. He that humbleth himself will be exalted, either by the vote of the congregation, or by the Lord's will.

As the matter is stated in our text, Matt. 20:27, we think the Lord meant this: There will be some of you who necessarily will be recognized as chief. There are various kinds of service, and it is necessary to have a chief in connection with the services of each congregation. God has recognized this Himself. He made Jesus a Chief. He passed by Satan, who was self-seeking. He chose Jesus, and made the road very narrow to Him! But after Jesus had proved His humility, then the Father gave Him the high exaltation, gave Him the great reward promised.

The Father is seeking now those who will have the same spirit of **humility**, the same spirit of **service**, that the Lord Jesus manifested. We look at Him, and we see that, while the Father held out the condition of being **chief**, He also held out the condition of being **servant**. Jesus, we see, was the Servant of all. Therefore God exalted Him and gave Him a name above every name.

So it should be with each little congregation of the Church. It is the Lord's will that not every one who would be its chief servant should be recognized as the chief. But the Lord will recognize the one who will show himself humble-minded, as He has shown Himself to be, in doing **anything** for the brethren. Let such be your servant. Each should consider that the chief honor amongst you, amongst the Lord's brethren, is to be servant. And the one who is most faithful should be given the opportunity to serve. In that sense he would be your chief.—Z. '13:296.

◆

There are no people in the world so blessed as those who have the Truth and are serving the Truth.—Z. '14:5.

◆

Those who come in the spirit of prayer and with a real desire for those blessings which God has promised to give, will see that prayer is a privilege restricted to a certain class. Those who do not esteem it a privilege may as well not come; for God has not as yet made any proposition to the world. Prayer is the privilege of God's children.—Z. '13:83.

◆

From the time of making their full consecration to be the Lord's servants, faithful unto death in the service of righteousness, they will regard that Heavenly Kingdom as the great treasure beyond all comparison of value. They will seek it **daily, hourly**. Their hearts will be there—with the treasure. It will be the theme of their thoughts by day and of their meditations by night. Earthly occupations will still be necessary to them, in order to provide things needful and honest; but no earthly prize will have any value in comparison to the Heavenly prize, in their estimation. **Such** will be the successful heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promised to those that love Him more than they love houses or lands, parents or children or self.—Z. '14:45.

◆

There is a difference between the operation of the Lord's Spirit in His children now and its operation in the days of the Prophet Jeremiah, and the other holy prophets. During the Jewish Age the Holy Spirit acted upon the servants and mouthpieces of God in a mechanical manner. Now the people of the Lord have both His Message in His written word and the begetting of the Spirit which gives us a spiritual understanding impossible to His people of past Ages. The mysteries of God are now opened up to His faithful children, the watchers; and we are granted a clear understanding of the "deep things of God," some features of which were **never revealed until the present time,** even to the most faithful of the Lord's saints.—1 Thessalonians 5:1-6; Z. '14:198.

- HE is looking at us not to see if we are perfect in the flesh—for He knows that we are not and can never be—but to see whether or not we have the spirit of earnestness and loyalty which daily and hourly seeks to keep the body under and to cheerfully take up the cross.—Z. '16:183.

◆

THE MASTER'S COMFORTING MESSAGE

When we think of the great advantage which **we of the present day possess,** we are inclined to say, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holiness of living and God-likeness!" We have shining upon us with almost burning brightness the focused rays of Divine inspiration and revelation from the past 6,000 years. How it should consume in us all the dross of selfishness! How it should purify us! How humble it should make us! Even in our flesh we should be polished, bright, luminous representatives of our glorious Lord and Head.

The countenance of the majestic One present amongst the candle-sticks is said to be like lightning So great was the splendor that St. John fell as dead when he beheld it, just as Daniel did in the presence of the mighty One whom he saw, and just as Saul of Tarsus did before the majesty presented to him. (Daniel 10:4-11; Acts 9:3-9.) So it is symbolically with the Christian, when once he gets a glimpse of the glories of the Divine character. When once we get a true view of Him with whom we have to do, as the great Heart-searcher and Caretaker of His Church, we fall before Him, humbled to the dust, realizing that we are imperfect, that we cannot stand before our Master, that we are unworthy of His favor and blessing.

But as our Lord touched St. John gently, raising him up, so He has spoken to us comfort, peace and love, assuring us that we have a High Priest that can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, One who is able to sympathize and mercifully to assist, One who has bought us with His own precious blood, and who has accepted us and will number us as His Body members as long as we abide in Him, seeking in our hearts to know and to do His will. —Z. '16:344, 345.

◆

Time was when I did think that with
Abundant strength my rest from wily foe
And subtle enemy would be assured; but
I am undeceived. The light of Truth has
Shone into my mind and shown that He
In whom doth lie my "perfect strength" shall
"Teach my hands to war, my fingers how
To fight"; and so I learn that powers
Of ill are round about me as the air,
Needing a constant watch; and I have constant
Need that both my hands be free, and that
My fingers, where the Power to grasp the
Sword lies hid, be taught of Him to wage
The conflict whensoe'r the hour may be.
—Z. '13:46.

◆

We do not suppose that God has a love for Satan, although at first He did have a love for him. But since Satan is now of an evil, vicious character, it would be wrong for God to love him, and it would be wrong for us to love him. Even the worldly condition we must not love. We cannot serve God and Mammon. We cannot love God and Mammon because they are opposite. But as regards Satan, it is not our part to slander him, nor to express vituperative sentiments toward him. He is God's enemy. And God is able to attend to that case much better than we. So we are not to judge Satan nor to revile him. We read that even Michael would not bring a railing accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee."—Jude 9.

We are to do all the good we can, and be as helpful as possible. We are not competent to judge, to decree. It is therefore our duty to be fully submissive, and in due time the Lord will manifest the principles of righteousness, as in contrast with the principles of error. He will render His just verdict in due time, through His appointed channel. —Z. '13:198.

◆

The heavier the burden, the greater will be the blessing and the reward by and by; the more severe the experiences during the present time, the brighter shall be the glory, and the brighter shall be their character and the more sure shall they be of being fitted and polished for the heavenly Kingdom. From this standpoint every burden is light, because our yoke is appreciated, and is so easy, so reasonable; and additionally it is so light, because the Lord is with us in this yoke. He is the great Burden-bearer, and will not suffer us to be tempted nor to be pressed with more of the burdens of life than we should probably be able to endure. He is watching out for the interests of all those who take his yoke upon them. Their burdens are his burdens, their trials are his trials, their interests are his interests; yea, all things shall work for good to them because they love him.—Z. '00:137.

◆

Character is more like the oak than like the mushroom; it requires time for its development. Yet as the oak might be quickly killed with an axe, so even a strong character might be quickly undermined, prostrated, overthrown by sin. In other words, **upward development is slow, but downward tendencies** may take effect **rapidly,** if permitted.—Z. '12:352.

◆

We are to presume that God would have in training a considerable number already consecrated but not accepted to the high calling (because the general call has ceased).—Z. '02:252.

◆

"Above all things," urges the Apostle, these who are dead to the world, and misunderstood by the world, but alive toward God and accepted through Christ as God's sons (despite all the blemishes of the flesh), these should be **fervent in love amongst themselves.** Such as realize the true situation, such as are standing for the principles of righteousness and truth and loyalty to the Lord, and enduring hardness as good soldiers, **must have** a deeply sympathetic love for all others who, like themselves, are battling for the Lord, and for the same principles of right. Whoever has not a fervent (burning) love for his fellows has reason to question to what extent he is one with the Lord and with the little flock whose experiences the Apostle is here delineating. —Z. '03:365.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER FORTY-EIGHT

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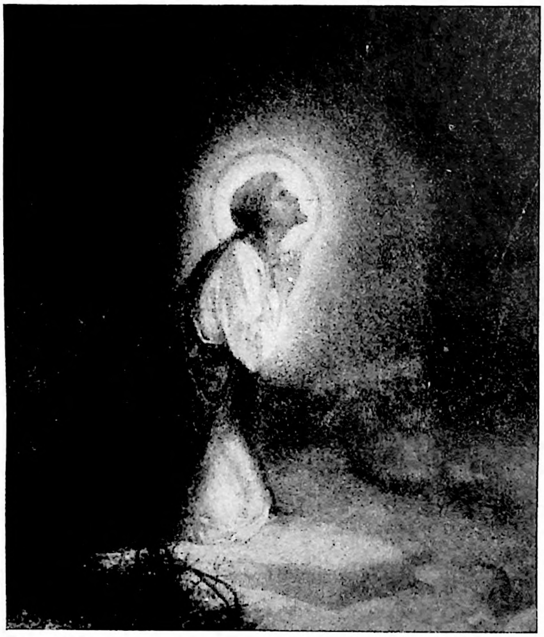
Our God Is Able



Thy Will Be Done

Year Text

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

For I am the Lord, thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.

—Isa. 43:2, 3.

It is expected that those who have had the high honor of betrothal to the great King's Son, the one "altogether lovely," will become so enchanted with their future prospects as to be almost oblivious to the things of this present time, except as to "things needful."

"Only for Jesus! Lord, keep this forever
Sealed on my heart and engraved on my life!
Pulse of all gladness and nerve of endeavor,
Secret of rest and the strength of our strife."
—Z. '07:345.

◆

The Apostle says that the tribulations which the Lord's people undergo, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in them. This should make us very moderate, very forbearing, under circumstances which would make others very rude, very angry, very immoderate. We can be very gentle, not only because of our knowledge of the nearness of the Kingdom, but also because of our knowledge of the weaknesses of others, which cause them to impinge upon our rights.—Z. '16:30.

◆

We remember that even amongst his loyal disciples the most courageous forsook the Lord and fled, and that one of them even in his timidity denied his Master! What an occasion is this for examining our own hearts as respects the degree of our faith and courage and willingness to suffer with him who redeemed us! What an opportunity is thus afforded for us to buttress the mind with resolutions that we will not deny our Master under any circumstances and conditions—that we will confess him not only with our lips but also by our conduct.—Z. '07:89.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FORTY-EIGHT

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

1921

Happy New Year

GREETINGS, dear fellow Watchers! The great clock of Time marks another cycle, and shows us another day's march nearer Home—nearer to our "change," and contact fellowship with our Savior—nearer to the Kingdom and its blessings for all the families of the earth.

"How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!"

But, though thus rejoicing in the flight of time, it is not with us as with many of the poor world when they would express themselves similarly. No, indeed! The love of Christ makes fresh our hearts, as a fountain ever springing, so that to the true children of God every day has the Christian's secret of a happy day and every year the same. We are greatly enjoying the present, with its songs and sighs, its pleasures and disappointments, its joys and discouragements, while waiting for and with the eye of faith looking for "That blessed hope, the glorious revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," and the wonderful riches of divine grace and blessing then to be showered upon the world of mankind under the New Covenant.

"It makes each trial blest" to realize that it is one of the "all things" promised to work for good to the Lord's Spirit-begotten children, who are being prepared for joint-heirship with their Lord in the great Kingdom which soon is to bless and uplift Adam and all his race. This is the secret which none but the blood-washed and consecrated, the spirit-begotten, can "comprehend." (Eph. 3:18.) These alone are able truly to sing:—

"Yes, happy every day has been
Since I am His and He is mine.
He leads me and I follow on
Directed through the Word divine."

Not that we are absolutely pure and perfect, any of us (except "pure in heart," pure in our intentions and desires), but that we by faith realize that our Redeemer's merit covers us, and permits us, if overtaken of a fault unwillingly, to apply for a share of the merit of "the blood" to cleanse our wedding garment from spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that our communion and fellowship with our Lord be never hindered except for a moment as it were.

Let us start the New Year properly, remembering the Apostle's words: "Set your affections on things above";—not on earthly things. If they slip away through earthly attractions reset them, time and time again.

"The joys of earth of little worth
Should not confine our thoughts to earth.
Why grasp at transitory toys
So near to heaven's eternal joys?"

Let us as "Children of the Highest" give earnest heed to the heavenly counsel as the essence of Wisdom. No matter how far advanced we may be in Christian character it will make us better to give earnest heed to this wisdom;—better husbands and wives, better parents and children, better colaborers, friends and neighbors! Let us be wise toward God, whatever fellowmen may consider us.—Z. '05:3.

Prayers That Are Heard

Psalm 141

"Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me."—V. 9.

WHEN we think of the greatness of the Creator, Maker of Heaven and earth and all therein, and when we think of our own littleness, our weaknesses and imperfections, we are amazed that our God has made any provision whereby even the best of His creatures might hold communion with Him in prayer. We should not fail to note the difference between worship and praise, which anybody may render to the Lord, and prayers and supplications, which are acceptable only from the Lord's consecrated people and their children while still minors.

To illustrate: It is one thing that the populace may cheer a governor or a king, may remove their hats or bow their heads, but it is quite another thing for that same conglomeration of people to be received by the king or the governor into association as his friends or to have communion with him, to tell him about their matters, to have his counsel and guidance. So, while God has an interest in the whole world of mankind, a deep interest, it is not the same interest that He has in His Church. And by His Church we mean, not any sect or party or denomination, but those individuals who, regardless of sectarian lines, have entered into a heart covenant with the Lord, renouncing their own wills and accepting, instead, the will of God in Christ. These are the Bible Church, whose names are written in Heaven. (Hebrews 12:23.) These are the ones addressed in the Bible as the saints of God, and respecting whom it is declared, "All things are yours; . . . and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Corinthians 3:21-23.

This Church of God, in all the world, is not numerically strong. As the Bible says, it contains not many rich, not many wise, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom. (1 Corinthians 1:26; James 2:5.) Their reigning, their power and their control in the world's affairs will not come until they shall have experienced the resurrection change, and Messiah's Kingdom shall be fully inaugurated. Then these shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years. —Revelation 20:4.

Who May Pray

Strangely enough, many seem to have gotten the thought that anybody, at any time, may rush into the presence of the Almighty God with his requests. The intimation even seems to be that God is unhappy because people do not come to Him thus. Such views of prayer indicate a lack of Bible study, Bible information. The Bible teaches that prayer is a great privilege.

Jesus declared, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." Furthermore, He indicated the restrictions upon those who would approach the Father through Him—they must be His disciples; and to become His disciples, they must take upon themselves certain obligations or vows. They must renounce their own wills, and accept the will of Jesus. They must lay all upon the altar; otherwise they cannot be accepted, cannot be presented to the Father, cannot be begotten of the Holy Spirit, cannot be styled or treated as sons of God, cannot be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ in His coming Kingdom—cannot have the privilege of sons of God in the present life either—the privilege of prayer and of Divine fellowship, communion, instruction.

All these special blessings the Bible reserves for those who become especially, peculiarly, the sons of God. Even in respect to these who have become sons of God, Jesus intimates a danger of their losing the privilege of prayer. He says, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye may ask what ye will"—not otherwise.—John 15:7.

We believe that misinformation on this subject of prayer has worked disadvantageously to many. The majority, holding intercourse with evil, only occasionally flee to the Lord in some trouble, and that without entering into any covenant with Him or receiving any recognition as sons, and without desiring this. If they were rightly informed, the effect upon their minds at first would be to stun them. They would awake suddenly to the realization that they are without God in the world; that their affairs are not subject to His supervision; but that as part of the world, they are under the general curse, or sentence of death.

The highest qualities of the human mind, which lie at the very top of our craniums, are the organs of worship, reverence, veneration, spirituality. Even the wicked, at times, feel that they will please God by praying to Him and asking Him for some favors. They have not learned that God has addressed them, saying, "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, to take My Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest My words behind thee?"—Psalm 50:16, 17.

It is high time that the difference between the Church and the world shall be more distinctly discerned, and that the privileges of the Church shall be appreciated. The effect would be to awaken in others a sense of their need for God. Then, in their hours of distress, realizing that they have no God, would they not be the more likely to seek Him earnestly in His appointed way, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through a full consecration—the only terms upon which Jesus would accept them and be their Advocate with the Father, and secure for them the title and privilege of sons of God, valuable both for the present life and for that which is to come?

Incense, Prayer, Before God

The Prophet David, in this lesson, pictures the Christian in his distress coming to God in His appointed way: "O Lord, I cry unto Thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto Thee. Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense." This is the same thought elsewhere expressed in the Bible—that the prayers of God's people rise up before Him as a sweet perfume. (Revelation 5:8.) And, by the way, we remember that the incense of old, which typified the prayers of the saints, was composed of a rare mixture of spices, giving forth a peculiarly sweet odor; and that nobody was allowed to make that incense except the priests who were to offer it. (Exo. 30: 34-38; 37:29.) Thus again the Lord shows us that the privilege of prayer, of approaching Him in an acceptable manner, is confined to the antitypical priests, called by St. Peter the Royal Priesthood.—1 Peter 2:9.

Only those of the Lord's people who have consecrated their lives to Him, even unto death, are thus represented as members of the sacrificing Priesthood, to whom the Apostle wrote, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, and your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1.) The Lord has pledged to this particular class that He will hear them, yea, that He will answer them—not necessarily according to their natural preferences, but He will heed the spirit of their cry and give to them, according to His Wisdom, the experiences and blessings most helpful.

What We Should Pray For

Our prayers should be in harmony with our endeavors. Thus in our lesson the Church of Christ are represented as praying the Lord to set a guard over their lips. The thought is that they are striving to keep their lips, their mouths, from utterances that would be injurious to others; and that, on the contrary, they may be helpful to humanity and honoring to God. Also, because they are striving for heart purity and to avoid practising wicked works with evil doers, therefore they pray in harmony, "Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties"—assist me in my determination of opposition to all these things.

How appropriate that the Lord's consecrated people should scrutinize their lives when they come to their Father in prayer! How appropriate for them to note to what extent their blessings, luxuries and dainties have come to them contrary to the principles of justice and love—contrary to the Golden Rule! Whoever intelligently thus prays will surely be examining his life to rectify his business relations, so that he may not eat of the dainties which would come from injustice or oppression, but, on the contrary, rejoice in the commonest things of life if they be the best procurable in harmony with the principles of righteousness, the principles of love.

"Let the Righteous Smite"

The class that are thus in fellowship with God, through prayer and through seeking to be obedient to His arrangements and laws, are so fully engaged that they are able to say, as in this Psalm, that they will take no offense if reproved by the righteous—rather the reproofs of such will be to them like an excellent oil, such as a guest received from his host in ancient times. The true Christians, the class who have the fellowship with God through prayer, have the qualities of heart which the Apostle describes as the fruits of the Holy Spirit; namely, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. (Galatians 5:22, 23; 2 Peter 1:5-8.) And because possessing these, they are not easily offended, but indeed are glad to have such experiences and lessons as the Lord's providences may direct to them—especially if these come through the brethren, and particularly if the brethren who use these administer their rebukes in a Christian manner—in meekness, remembering themselves, lest they also be tempted.—Galatians 6:1.

In such cases, the reproof will be a blessing from the Lord—if given in that spirit and received in that spirit. Neither their heads nor their hearts are broken by such Scriptural reproofs; and they themselves learn to administer admonitions to others in similar manner, so as not to injure, but to help. Their prayers are for each other in what seem to be calamities; and in harmony with the Lord's promise, these seeming calamities and all the affairs of life shall operate together for good to those who love Him, to the called ones according to His purpose. —Z. '15:154-156.

"Set Your Affections on Things Above"

EARTHLY loves do not always tend toward sensuality, but they do **always** tend in another direction from the interests of the New Creature. We have known instances in which very strong attachments grew up between **brethren**, and similarly between **sisters**, to their spiritual injury. The injury consists in a satisfaction of the longings of their souls in an earthly companionship, however pure. **It is not the Lord's intention that His people should have heart-satisfaction in anybody, on the earthly plane.** It is His intention that thorough loyalty to Him and to His Word will make us realize our individual responsibility to Him, and draw us individually close to Him, that **in Him** we may each find the companionship, joy, and peace which all true hearts crave.

Any satisfaction, therefore, in the fellowship of the old creature, however pure-intentioned, is to the discredit of the New Creature and his spiritual fellowship with the Lord. The fact that we would be fully satisfied in any one on the earthly plane should be an evidence to us that we have not attained that lofty sentiment and aspiration which the Lord designs for us and which He alone can satisfy.

The admission into our lives of a close, absorbing fellowship in the flesh, however pure the intention, would be a disadvantage to the New Creature in another way. Not only would it imply his failure to rightly appreciate the Lord and fellowship with Him, but it would imply a failure to rightly appreciate the fellowship of the entire Body of Christ, which is the Church.

The Spirit of Christ is too broad to permit the centering of our sympathy and interest upon one individual, except that individual be the Lord Himself. As for others—the Body of Christ, the Church—our interest should be in all of them, not merely in the rich, but in the poor; not merely in the wise and noble, but in the less wise and ignoble; not merely in the educated, but also in the ignorant and stupid. Our interest must not be in the flesh, but in them as New Creatures in Christ. And those who have the greatest handicap as respects earthly teaching and weaknesses of the flesh are the ones deserving of our earthly sympathies and affections, as they strive to fight the good fight and overcome their blemishes.

We exhort, therefore, that we as the Lord's people set our affections more and more upon the things above, and not on the things of the earth, that we may be transformed, that we may thus prove what is the good and acceptable will of God—that His will may be done in us perfectly. His will is not unreasonable. He remembers our frame—that it is but dust. He desires our will to be that our consecration shall be to Him, that it shall not be along lines of the flesh, but of the spirit, and not merely toward one individual, or little clique of the Church, but toward all who have named the name of Christ and who have set their faces Heavenward as soldiers of the cross marching toward the antitypical Mount Zion and the general Assembly of the Church of the First-born.—Psalm 103:14; Romans 8:4; Hebrews 12:23; Z. '13:166.

Greater Suffering—Greater Reward

2 Corinthians 4:16-18.

"The things which are not seen are eternal."—Verse 18.

WHAT great Christian courage St. Paul's words and deeds manifest! He that endured so many hardships, a veritable thrashing-machine experience, nevertheless writes: "We faint not; for though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Ah, that was the secret of the matter—the renewing of the inward man, the New Creature! The tribulations of the outward man would have been terrible experiences indeed had there been no inward man to take a different view of matters and to learn valuable lessons and experiences from the outward man's tribulations. The inward man had God's assurance that if God were for him the opposition of all others would be as nothing. He had the assurance that God would overrule all of his experiences for his highest welfare. He had the assurance of the Lord, too, that the glories of the future would be proportionate to the trials faithfully endured.

Fellowship in Christ's Sufferings

Ah, here we have the secret of the Apostle's great zeal for God, for the Church, for the Truth! He endured as seeing Him who is invisible to natural eyes. (Hebrews 11:27.) St. Paul lived a double life, in the sense that to man he was Saul of Tarsus, but in reality he was Paul, the servant of God, the New Creature in Christ Jesus. The world knew him not; but he knew himself, knew his God; and he was energized by the power Divine and by the Message of God's Word, which spoke to him peace and relationship to God through Christ, and also informed him of the glory, honor and immortality awaiting all the faithful ones at the end of the way.

And this secret of the Apostle's own experience is an open one to all of God's family of spirit-begotten children who faithfully are continuing to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and to be taught of Him through the Word. We do not have so large a manifestation of Divine favor as had Jesus, the Head of the Church, and the Apostles, the foremost members of the Church; but still we have in a general way the same favors of God, the same promises of God, the same inspiring hopes which they had. Let us not forget the Apostle's endurance when we read his words: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Corinthians 4:17.

The Apostle gives the same thought when, writing about the resurrection, he declares how it will be with the Church in the resurrection. All the faithful will be glorified, honored, blessed, perfected—not blessed in the same degree, however; but, "As star differeth from star in glory, so also it will be in the resurrection of the dead." (1 Corinthians 15:41, 42.) The same lesson is given us in Daniel's prophecy, where the resurrection is referred to and the resurrected ones are illustrated by the stars, whose beauty and brilliancy vary.—Daniel 12:1-3.

The Apostle's argument was that if the sufferings of Christ, in the Divine arrangement, are to measure the coming glories of Christ, then he desired to be a participator with the Lord in the present sufferings in order that he might also be a participator with Him in the coming glories. Instead, therefore, of saying to himself or to others: "I am doing more than my share of the Gospel work; and some others of you should come and help me, and give me a rest," St. Paul took the other view. He declared himself willing and anxious to fill up as much as possible that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ (Colossians 1:24.) He counted it all joy to have tribulation, knowing that tribulation would work out the fruits of the Holy Spirit in his character, and thus prepare him for the Kingdom. (Romans 5:3-5.) Incidentally, we remember the assurance of the Bible—that only if we suffer with Christ shall we reign with Him, and that only those who become dead with Him shall live with Him.

The Secret of His Faithfulness

Many find it easy to make a start in the Christian way when everything is favorable. Some run briskly for a while, and then grow weary in well-doing. But the Apostle seemed never to weary. He was always on the alert, in season and out of season, so far as his own convenience was concerned. He was ready to preach the Gospel anywhere, everywhere, to all who had the hearing ear. The secret of his perseverance is given us in Verse 18, in the words: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."

What do these words mean? They mean that St. Paul had spiritual eyesight. He indeed saw earthly attractions, but they lost their drawing power upon him because of his spiritual sight—his perception of the things unseen. With the eye of faith he saw the Heavenly Father, the glorified Lord Jesus, the Heavenly hosts, the coming Kingdom of glory, honor and immortality. By faith he saw the great Millennial Kingdom spreading out before him, and heard the Divine invitation to become an heir in that Kingdom, to be joined in heirship with the Master and Redeemer. He had accepted this invitation. He had enlisted under the banner of the Master; and he realized that everything else in the world was of practically no value in comparison with these eternal things which God had promised. His confidence was in the Word of God.

So it is with the Lord's people today. We may see the advantages of politics, social standing, wealth, business, etc., etc. But all these earthly aims and ambitions are of comparatively little value to us because we have seen, with the new eyesight of the New Creature, the Heavenly things. Our ears have heard God's Message. We have been able to discern the things of the Spirit—the things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him, the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of the natural man. (1 Corinthians 2:9.) We realize more and more that all the things of the present evil world are temporal in character; that they are to pass away with the New Dispensation which is just at the door; and that earthly honors and powers are all of less value every minute.

On the contrary, we see that the things which God offers us are eternal things. Is it any wonder that the Bible sets forth the importance of doctrine? Whoever is well indoctrinated from the real Bible viewpoint is strong in the Lord. Whoever is without this knowledge of the Kingdom and without this spiritual sight and hearing will necessarily be weak, and will lack the evidence of being a New Creature in Christ Jesus.—2 Cor. 5:17; Z. '16:265, 266.

Evil-Doers and Busybodies

"But let none of you suffer as . . . an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."—1 Peter 4:15.

ASSUREDLY none of the Lord's people could willingly be evil-doers. He who would wilfully do evil would not have the Lord's Spirit, but that of the Adversary. Such being the case, the worst that could be said against any of the truly consecrated surely would be that he had been overtaken in a fault, or that he had some weakness of the flesh, or that by the snare of the Adversary he had been led into doing something which his heart disapproved. But evil deeds, even though unintentional, are to be guarded against carefully. "Let none of you suffer as an evil-doer"—not one—at any time—under any circumstances.

But now we come to the second part of the Apostle's warning—**busybodying.** The saints seem as liable as others to become busybodies and to suffer for so doing. We have sometimes thought that the Lord's consecrated people are more inclined to be busybodies than are others. They have higher standards than others. Their love of righteousness is greater than before, and their hatred of iniquity is greater. There is continually a temptation, therefore, not to be content with minding one's **own business,** but to advise and to seek to regulate everybody and everything.

Of course there is a duty devolving upon every parent to inquire more or less into the affairs of his children, or of those in any manner under his direct care, for whom he is responsible. But even in this he should seek to recognize individual rights and privacies, and not allow his sense of duty and responsibility to impel him to probe into every little matter. A certain reasonable amount of responsibility should be thrown upon children, and they should have a general idea of what is expected of them. They should be required to measure up to that standard, unless something positively indicates to the contrary. The spirit of busybodying is condemned by the Apostle, and all of God's people should be on guard against it.

Our experience is that busybodying is a fruitful source of difficulty in the Church—in all the ecclesias. A clear knowledge of Present Truth seems rather to increase this difficulty. As in families a wrong feeling often obtains, which impels each member to want to know all about the affairs of every other member, so in the Church there is also a tendency to meddle, to inquire about, to interfere in the matters of others—to **busybody.** In some cases there seems to be a disposition to try to hunt up everything connected with each other, and to sit in judgment upon each other.

The difficulty is a lack of love. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." It rejoices not to find flaws; it seeks not for them. It surmises no evil—rather it surmises good. Let each of the Lord's people judge himself in this matter and see to what extent he has been a busybody in the affairs of others. Let each decide in his own case that the fault, in proportion as he has it, is a lack of the spirit of love, and let each in that proportion go to the Lord prayerfully, earnestly seeking to be built up in the quality of love..

Well do we know that he who loves not a brother whom he has seen has no assurance that he really loves God whom he has not seen. We may safely conclude that there is some of the gall of bitterness in the heart, if we take pleasure in seeking flaws in the flesh of the members of the Body of Christ. Their flesh, justified by the Redeemer and consecrated, becomes **His flesh. Whoever, therefore, is a faultfinder and busybody in the affairs of the brethren is doing this against the flesh of Jesus. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."**—Acts 9:5; 22:8.

Ensnared by the Adversary

Our confidence in the brethren is such that we cannot believe that any of them would willingly and intentionally, or of preference, take the loveless course of injury. Our thought is that the Adversary is on the alert to ensnare God's people and to develop in them the spirit of busybodying and lovelessness, under the guise of duty, love of righteousness, justice, etc. They overlook the fact that God neither authorized us to judge one another, nor to exact justice from each other. He neither authorized His people to chastise each other, nor to punish each other in any manner. He has never authorized His people to become inquisitors, investigators, busybodies.

On the contrary, He has told us to "judge nothing before the time," and that He will attend to this matter. Is it not written, "The Lord will judge His people"? Are we afraid that He is incompetent? Shall we attempt to be wiser than He? or shall we take into our own hands matters which He said that we should leave in His hands? If we do so, we shall be sure to get ourselves into difficulty, and perhaps get others into difficulty as well.

Whoever busybodies will suffer. It may be that the victim also will suffer and that many will be defiled, but we may be sure that the busybodies themselves will not escape. The punishment of the busybody in part no doubt will be the rupture of his own relationship with God—the loss of his own peace and joy and fellowship with the Holy Spirit. This will be his reward for busybodying.

If a brother and a sister in the Church seem to have difficulty, mind **your own** business, and allow them to settle the matter between themselves. If they are related as parents and children, let them adjust the matter by themselves, and learn whatever lessons the Lord as their Judge and Teacher will give them. If they are husband and wife, the matter is the same. Let them alone. Do not busybody. Even if one of them should come to you and ask advice, be slow to give it—decline to hear the case—follow the Lord's counsel. Advise the one who complains that the Lord has given instructions, and that it is not your province to interfere—that Matthew 18:15-17 directs the course to be pursued.

See that you have nothing to do with such a case unless it come to you directly in line with this arrangement which the Lord has provided. Otherwise you are busybodying and will make trouble for yourselves and for others. If called into the family mix-up, rather regret the necessity than be eager to nose into their affairs. Advise them first, in the best way you know how, to adjust matters between themselves, reminding them of the words of Jesus, "That which God hath joined together let no man put asunder," and then see that **you** do nothing to put them asunder or to help to complete the separation of spirit which already has started.

Remember that as the Lord's representative you have no authority whatever to be in the least a **disturber,** but are commissioned only to be a **peacemaker.** When you are called in, in such a case, try to be just, fair, reasonable, in full accord with the Golden Rule in every word that you shall utter. Those who may hope to be entrusted with the judgment of the world in the future (1 Corinthians 6:2) must qualify now by a development of a high sense of mercy and love, as well as of justice.

Busybodying An Evidence of Pride

But, says one, is it not a part of our duty to help keep the Church pure? And in order to do so, should we not be on the alert? If, therefore, we see a husband and a wife, or a brother and a sister, or parents and children out of accord, are we not in duty bound to pry into their affairs, in order to see if we cannot set them straight?

That is exactly the busybody's spirit. We are mentioning it because a great many of the Lord's dear people who **mean** the very best do not know what busybodying is while they are doing it. Mind **your own** affairs! If you get too busy watching **others,** the Adversary will take advantage of you. So long as the outward conduct of any brother or sister is reasonable and fair, Justice and Love both say that you should not meddle with them, in the sense of trying to mind **their** business. Content yourself with setting them a good example of meekness, faith, patience, brotherly-kindness, love. Then if they ever need advice, they may voluntarily come to you. And then will be your time to show your moderation and to give them advice as an oracle of God, in harmony with Matthew 18:15-17—and **nothing more.**

But, says another, does not St. Paul criticise the Church at Corinth because they had in their midst one who had grievously sinned? And did he not upbraid the Church for their failure to judge and rid themselves of such a person? Quite true . But that was a case of open, wilful, acknowledged sin, disgraceful to the individual and to all with whom he associated. And so it should be today. If any one lives in open sin, and acknowledges it, and boasts of it, the case should be promptly taken note of by the Church, along the lines of Matthew 18:15-18. If the erring one still continues in a wrong attitude, in open sin, the final step should be his complete separation from the Church. Until he has made a complete reform, he should be thoroughly disowned by the Church.

Surely such cases are rare among the Lord's people, and equally rare should be the procedure which the Apostle suggests for such a case. The Apostle is not suggesting inquisition into the past lives of all those who constitute the Church of Christ. On the contrary, in one of his Epistles he intimates that he knew full well that many who were of the Church had at one time been quite disreputable characters. He says, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."—1 Corinthians 6:11.

It is a wholly mistaken idea that any of us is commissioned to set everybody else right. It betokens a great deal of pride to have such an impression. If some brother and sister do not harmonize very well, let them alone. If they think it best not to be very intimate, let them alone. If they are married, and believe it to be to their best interests to live separate, let them alone—mind your own business. If there is some secret fault, let them alone. "God will judge His people." You have no business to meddle with it, unless He gives you some further commission than we find in the Scriptures.—Z. '13:211, 212.

God First—Self Last

ALL of the Lord's true people, begotten of His Holy Spirit, are beautiful characters as New Creatures: As the Apostle expresses it, "Holy Brethren, partakers of the Heavenly calling." (Hebrews 3:1.) "Every one that loveth Him that begat [the Heavenly Father] must love also that which is begotten of Him." (1 John 5:1.) The fact that the Heavenly Father has anything to do with a human being and in any sense of the word recognizes him—especially if He recognizes him as a son—signifies that there is a nobility of character, an honesty of heart and a consecration of will, whether we be able to see these things in the outward conduct and words of the individual or not. We must assume that they are there—that God, who readeth the heart, sees them to be there. Having confidence in the Divine Wisdom, it is proper for all of the Lord's people to accept each other as New Creatures in Christ, to whom old things are passed away and for whom all things have become new. But, as the Apostle points out, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels": these good hearts, these consecrated wills, have no perfect spirit bodies in which to operate yet. They can act and speak only through the poor, imperfect flesh, which is consecrated to death.

And oh, how the imperfect tongue and the imperfect body often misrepresent the real sentiments of the New Creature using them! Our stammering tongues fail to express our real sentiments, and we are misunderstood. Our poor brains, which the New Creature strives to exercise in favor of justice and love, often get sadly twisted. The justice we would do, we often misunderstand and do not; and the love which we wish to manifest, is twisted also and misunderstood by others and is unsatisfactory to ourselves. Early in our Christian experience, we may have failed to see our blunders, and frequently have done injury where we supposed we had done good. Later, as we began to see our imperfect works, imperfect words, imperfect thoughts and reasoning, and discerned how little we really accomplished of the much we would like to do, we were in danger of being thoroughly discouraged. We needed the very encouragements which the Lord's Word holds out to us—the assurance that God looketh at the heart and not at the outward appearance; and that the pure in heart will be blessed and see God, notwithstanding the weaknesses of their flesh, against which they strive courageously.

God First in Our Hearts

Many are the rules and practises which will be assistful to the New Creature while endeavoring to prove loyal and to fight down and overcome the imperfections of his flesh. A great variety of rules might be mentioned, including the study of God's Word, continual watchfulness and endeavor to cultivate the fruits of the Holy Spirit, the remembrance of the Golden Rule, etc., etc. But we now wish to call attention to one general rule which seems to have an application to all of our thoughts and words and actions. If this rule be followed, the entire life will thereby be regulated. This rule is—God first, self last!

This is a hard rule so far as the old creature is concerned, and he will rebel against it—especially the latter part—putting self last. But the old creature cannot really object to the rule so far as "God first" is concerned; for even natural men realize that there are proper obligations to the Creator; but the New Creature sees this obligation in a special light. It is this special light which led to the making of a full consecration to the Lord, to enlistment under the banner of Jesus to fight a good fight against sin entrenched in the flesh, and to faithfulness in this warfare even unto death. In making this consecration, the individual put God first, Jesus next, and himself as the servant of These and the principles which They represent; and his flesh as devoted, consecrated, given over to death in the service of these principles.

But it is one thing to recognize the principles, and quite another thing to apply them in the daily life and in the Church. God first in the home and the personal affairs means that all earthly interests and pleasures will be subordinated, and that the will of God, the service of God, the honor of God's name, will have the most prominent part in all of our affairs every day—in all of our words, in all of our dealings, in our very thoughts.

Extending this principle to the Church, which is the Body of Christ, we perceive that if all the brethren had this spirit, it would imply the very highest ideals and practises in the Church. As the Apostle admonishes, nothing would be done through strife or vain glory, but merely to the glory of God—God first! It would mean that in all the matters of our worship, praise, and Bible study, pride or fond desire and selfishness and partiality and hypocrisy would be far away; for God would be **first,** and we would know that all of these traits of evil entrenched in our flesh are contrary to the will of our God.

Application of Principles

In the election of servants in the Church, the rule of "God first" would mean that each one in voting would seek to vote according as he believed to be **God's will,** entirely ignoring **his own will** and the wills of all others of the brethren. "God first" would also lead him to take an individual stand in that kind, loving manner which the Bible declares to be the Holy Spirit, or disposition of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. Surely a blessing would follow such an endeavor to put God first, and to forget everything that might be in competition with the Lord in our affection!

As for the latter part of this resolution—"self last," this would mean the very essence of the Apostle's admonition, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory" (Philippians 2:3); and again, "in honor preferring one another." (Romans 12:10.) We look back at the record of the Twelve Apostles, and see how they were disposed to strive amongst themselves as to which should be greatest in the Kingdom. But this striving was before their begetting of the Holy Spirit, before Pentecost. How glad we are to see that such a spirit apparently disappeared after Pentecost, amongst those who received the spirit-begetting! "Self last" might well have been the rule among the Apostles—so loyally did they support the principles of the Lord's Word and uphold and encourage one another in the good work. How we rejoice with them!

But how sad it makes us feel when some dear brethren of our day, who profess to have received the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and whose professions we do not doubt, seem not to have learned this lesson of "self last"! "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." (1 Peter 5:6.) Occasionally, we perceive some disposed to seek office as Elders or as Deacons of the Church, disposed to feel offended if they are not elected to these offices. Oh, what a pity that they cannot take the better view of the matter! We do not question their hearts; we shall suppose that as long as they abide in the Truth, the Lord's Spirit is not taken from them. And yet how little **growth in grace** is implied where a spirit of self-seeking is manifested amongst brethren aspiring to leadership in the Ecclesia!

"While Place We Seek"

Dear Brethren, let us truly humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and take whatever His providence metes out to us with full contentment. If for **any** reason the Class chooses us to the position of Elder or of Deacon, let us be thankful to the Class and to the Lord; and let us use our privilege as **a** gift, as a favor, with humility of spirit, remembering that an elder brother in the Class is **a servant** of the Class. Let us seek to use our opportunities and stewardship wisely, as those who must ultimately give an account. If on another occasion, the Class for **any** reason passes us by, failing to elect us to a service, let us remember that that is the Class's privilege—yea, each one of the Class is in duty bound to vote according as his judgment shall be respecting the **Divine will.** Should we quarrel with the Divine will? Nay. Should we quarrel with the brethren for exercising their judgment respecting the Divine will? Nay. What should we do? Let us accept the Divine arrangement and be just as thankful of heart, and be just as energetic to serve in the proper ways according to our opportunities. Let us not seek to put stumbling-blocks in the way of those who have been chosen for the service, but rather do all in our power to co-operate with them.

Let the brother of high degree—that has a high position of favor in the Class—rejoice if he is debased and removed from the position. Let him rejoice to learn whatever lessons the Lord's providence may have for him. Let him rejoice to learn how to serve in another position. And let a brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted. Let us receive whatever experiences come to us as being under Divine supervision, remembering that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28.) Let us be on the alert to have **God first,** the interests of His cause, His people, the Church—and our own interests and **ourselves, last.** We may be sure, dear Brethren, that whoever is thus found faithful, in harmony with the principles taught and exemplified by our Redeemer, will have some good place in the Redeemer's Kingdom by and by; and that all the present experiences will be overruled for his preparation for that Kingdom position.

The time for our exaltation is not now. The dear brethren may have exalted us to some service in the Class for which we were not worthy, and the possession of which might have made us heady or otherwise have injured us. The proper thought is that **God is at the helm,** and is able to make our experiences work out blessings to us, as individuals and as Classes. It is for us to be rightly exercised by the Lord's Word and by the Spirit of our Master, putting **God first; self, last.**—Z. '16:279, 280.

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The question seems not to be, Who will fall, but, as Scripturally put, "Who shall be able to stand?" In the ninety-first Psalm the Prophet tells who will stand, namely, Those whose habitation is the Lord; those who abide under his shadow; those who trust under his wings for protection. The picture is that of a mother hen, who when the hawk is about, clucks for her brood, calling them under her shadow, under her wings, under her special protection. Corresponding to the cluck of the hen in this picture seems to be the "Vow," or solemn Resolution to great faithfulness of living, in harmony with our original vow, in thought, in word, and in act.—Z. '09:4.

Meditations In The Night

"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness: and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips, when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches." —Psalm 63:5, 6.

BY THE expression as to satisfying his soul with marrow and fatness, the Prophet David evidently referred to the abundance of God's favor and blessing which had come to him. He had a large portion, a fat portion, and appreciated God's goodness, God's favor toward him, taking him as a shepherd boy from among the flocks, and privileging him to engage in His service and finally bringing him to the throne as the king of Israel. For all this he was very grateful to the Lord. He appreciated all of God's blessings. It was appropriate that his mouth should give praise, that he should be joyful, that he should speak of the Lord's loving-kindness. So we find in the Psalms of David many beautiful expressions in which he gives great praise and thanksgiving to the Almighty. He speaks also of God's majesty, of His wondrous power and might, and refers to the heavens as His handiwork.

The Prophet certainly used his tongue to praise the Lord. When we consider that he lived in a time when schooling was limited and that he got very little of it, we realize that he certainly made good use of what he obtained. The fruit of his labor has come down to bless the world all through the centuries. He intimates that he did this singing or praising God to some extent in the night—"when I remember Thee upon my bed and meditate upon Thee in the night watches." In ancient times the people were more dependent upon the moon and stars for light at night, not having as we have today full provision for illumination by means of refined oil, gas, electricity, etc. Mr. Rockefeller had not yet been born, nor modern inventions dreamed of. They were dependent for artificial light upon olive oil, and that was not very plentiful. As a consequence, the people went to bed early. So King David was thinking upon the Almighty as he lay upon his bed, meditating upon God—he was not thinking foolish thoughts, not planning foolish doings. When we think of this, we are not surprised that his mind was full of beautiful thoughts.

Noblest Subject for Meditation

Whoever has time for meditation, will receive a great blessing if his thoughts shall turn toward the Almighty, acknowledging His goodness, seeking to give praise to God for all His manifold mercies, meditating upon God in the night watches. As far as this verse is concerned, we see no reason for thinking it prophetic; yet it represents any who are seeking to be in harmony with God. We should be continually remembering the Lord in all of our moments of rest, whether upon a bed, or wherever it may be. **We should cultivate the habit of meditating upon Him.** We think very few people meditate upon the Lord; and it is to their disadvantage that they do not.

The great and holy Laws of God find expression in Him. We should think of God as the personification of all that is just, loving, kind, wise, in character and principle. This should stimulate us to be like Him. The more we appreciate a noble character the more we desire to emulate it. The more we see of God's mighty works in nature and His mercies toward us, in that same proportion our hearts and lips will praise Him. If there is a prophetic thought connected with this passage, it is that all through the Dark Ages, all through the night time of this Age, God's faithful people have been praising Him. All of His true people have been praising Him and have done so with joyful lips. Those who have not been doing this are not of this class. We should, therefore, render praise to our God. We should meditate more and more upon His Holy will and ways, and strive to conform ourselves thereto. Thus shall we become more and more like unto our Father in Heaven.—Z. '15:311, 312.

The Secret of a Happy Life

THE Christian's secret of a happy life lies in his **knowing** and **trusting** the Heavenly Father and the Heavenly Bridegroom. They have heard the voice saying,—

Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you.—1 Pet. 5:7.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.—1 John 3:1.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear (reverence) him.—Psa. 103:13.

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart.—Psa. 31:24.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want: His goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.—Psa. 23:6.

True, the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word may not hinder us from feeling pain, but it will modify the severity of the pain and its frequency. Physicians are of one opinion on this subject, that the mind, the brain, the nervous center of our being, exercises a great influence over all of our physical sensations, either an aggravating or a pacifying influence. Truly did Solomon, the wise, say that the Lord's word is a valuable "medicine." —Prov. 3:8.

But we have said that these blessings come through **knowing** and **trusting** God: some fail to get the blessings because of a lack of knowledge;

others having the knowledge lack the trust, the faith; still others, and they are probably in the majority among consecrated Christians, enjoy a small measure of these blessings when they might have them in abundant measure by a more thorough knowledge of God through his Word (accompanied, of course, with obedience to the spirit of their knowledge) and by the exercise of greater trust in the Faithful Promiser.

We exhort all the **consecrated** readers to join with us at the beginning of the New Year, in a remembrance and renewal of our covenant with the Lord,—to be obediently and lovingly **his,** in thought, word and deed—and in harmony therewith, and to the intent that we may enjoy his blessings to our fullest capacity and under all conditions, let us put on the armor of truth and righteousness; fastening the same upon us with the graces of the spirit. As an assistance we suggest as a text to be remembered and practiced daily, the words of the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 7:1)—

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, **perfecting** holiness in the fear of the Lord."

And whoever would have success in carrying out the foregoing resolves should not only make the engagement at the throne of the heavenly grace, but should at all times and under all circumstances preserve the spirit of thankfulness and prayer. As the Apostle expresses it, he should "pray without ceasing, and in **everything** give thanks." For what son is he that the father chasteneth not? If ye be without chastisements and lessons, then ye are not sons. The Heavenly Father chastens for correction, every son whom he receives.—Z. '97:4.

Justification of Ancient Worthies

In connection with the Article "The Three Great Covenants," O.C.G. 39, especially page 5, par. 2, the following should be considered as Brother Russell's latest thought.

NOT until Abraham had shown his absolute heart-loyalty could he be counted of God as **worthy** of a "better resurrection" than the remainder of mankind—resurrection to human perfection—actual justification, actual rightness or righteousness. Even when Abraham's tests were all passed satisfactorily he could not still be actually justified or made actually perfect; because he needed to be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. As a member of Adam's family he was under a death sentence which must be annulled before he could be actually justified to the perfection of human life. Abraham had done his part to the Divine pleasement, but he must wait for his perfecting until the great Mediator, the Second Adam, Head and Body, would be complete and the New Covenant be sealed with Abraham and his natural seed, giving them earthly restitution and perfection at the hands of their Mediator.—Heb. 11:38-40.

When our Lord Jesus at his First Advent died some one might have said, Now Abraham and all the Ancient Worthies are justified. But that would not have been strictly true. It would have been true only in the sense that an unconscious, half-drowned child had been caught by its rescuer. An on-looker might shout, Hurrah, the child is saved! Yet really the rescuer must get the child into the boat and the work of resuscitation must be accomplished before the child would be fully saved.

Even when our Lord Jesus "ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God **for us,"** and made satisfaction for our sins, as did the typical priest, sprinkling the blood of Atonement on the Mercy-Seat—even then Abraham and the other Ancient Worthies were not saved—not actually justified or made actually right—nor legally right. Why not? Because the precious blood was not then applied on behalf of Abraham and the other Ancient Worthies, nor on behalf of the world in general. The Apostle declares, "He appeared in the presence of God **for us."** We are not finding fault with those who lump matters and in a general way say, "Christ died for the whole world." We heartily assent to that. He did die **for** the whole world in the sense that in God's "due time" the whole world will have the full benefit of the merit of his sacrificial death. Thus again, "He is a propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." His death had as its ultimate object not only the cancellation of the Church's sins, but also ultimately the cancellation of the sins of the whole world. But when he ascended up on high he made application **"for us"** and not for the world. He will make a fresh application of his own blood for the sins of the whole world at the close of this Gospel Age—this antitypical Day of atonement.

Notice how distinctly the Scriptures differentiate between the Church class (the "Little Flock" of Under-Priests, and the "Great Company" of antitypical Levites) and the remainder of mankind. "Ye," "we" and "us" are terms Scripturally applied to those "called" during this Gospel Age to be sharers with Christ in the high or heavenly calling—on the spirit plane like unto the angels. These are "not of the world," nor are they styled the children of Christ, but "his brethren," of whom he is the Elder Brother—Christ's members over whom he is the Head—the Bride class, of whom he is the Head or Bridegroom. On the contrary, Israel and the whole world must get their **life,** and **restitution rights** and perfection from The Christ, the Mediator. Thus our Lord will be the Father or Life-Giver to the world. He is not the life-giver to the Church, his Bride, his members. Although we were "justified through faith in his blood" we never received earthly life and human perfection from him actually. We received merely an **imputation** of earthly life-rights for the purpose of permitting us to **offer ourselves** "living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God," that we might become **members** of the Body of Christ, the Mediator, the Priest, the King of glory. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ hath begotten us." Ours is a spirit-begetting similar to that of our Lord Jesus and from the same source and for the same reason—because of our obedience, even unto sacrifice—made acceptable through our great Redeemer's merit.

Of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob it is written that they shall be the children of The Christ; they will receive the earthly life and its full restitution privileges directly from the Redeemer—"in due time." The world has not received life in any sense as yet. Hence the Apostle says, "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One." Jesus, the appointed Mediator between God and the world of mankind, has not yet taken up his work for them. They must wait until he shall have finished a preceding work "for us"—the gathering of the elect little flock from the world as his "members," "his Body," his Church.

When the time shall come for our Lord to make application of his merit on behalf of the world of mankind in general—for all not included in the household of faith, "us"—Abraham and all the Ancient Worthies will constitute the first-fruits on the earthly plane. Their justification will be made actual, vital, by a "better resurrection" than the remainder of mankind will enjoy. Having been approved of the Lord in the past they will be granted restitution instantly; whereas the world will come up to that plane of actual justification or human perfection by the slower processes of the Millennial Age. But the Ancient Worthies, like the remainder of mankind, reaching human perfection (actual justification) will be the children of Messiah. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45:16.) Hearken to the Apostle. They without us cannot be made perfect (actually justified to life), God having provided a superior thing for us first.—Heb. 11:38-40; Z. '10:86.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

Few traits of character more truly glorify the Lord than sweet temper.—Z. '15:117.

◆

If we have tried to do our best, and have been overtaken in a fault, He knows how to make allowance for us and to be very sympathetic.—Z. '16:296.

◆

Anyone who looks for the divine nature merely as a reward and feels that it is due him, is taking an improper view. We should feel that to be on the side of righteousness and to be identified with our Lord Jesus is a great privilege, if there be no reward of the divine nature at all; but the thought of the reward is a great incentive to run patiently for something super-abundant, exceedingly beyond what we could have asked or thought.—Z. '12:231.

◆

The Lord declares that His faithful ones are as precious to Him as the apple of His eye, and that all their interests are subject to Divine supervision. He will allow nothing to happen to these; troubles permitted to come upon them will be only such as the Lord has foreseen and is able to make work out some blessing in connection with their preparation for the Kingdom. But even this fact will not excuse wilfulness on the part of those who do evil to the members of the Body of Jesus.—Z. '12:346.

◆

We give God the praise that He has made us to differ from our former selves, that He is making us thus to differ more every day, and that He will continue the good work as the days go by and as we seek to do His will. What have we of ourselves? Nothing!—Z. '13:231.

◆

The Lord has arranged that our love for the brethren and our laying down our lives for them and in their defense is all done to Him; and He so esteems it. If the time should come when it would be necessary, there should be a readiness to lay down our lives for them. But more particularly, we are to lay these down inch by inch in their service, whether it be by cleaning off the snow from the pavement, or caring for them when they are ill, or cooking the dinner or the breakfast, or mailing papers to them to encourage them in the good way—no matter what the service. All these ways and many others are ministries to those who are the Lord's—laying down our lives for them. We rejoice to have such privileges, such opportunities—using our time and strength as the Lord in His providence shall indicate, realizing that the only use we have for our present life is to lay it down in the service of the Lord's brethren and ours, and to do good to any as we have opportunity, giving the brethren the preference.

We may never attain to the place, while we are in the flesh, where we shall say no word, do no act, to hurt a brother. We all have imperfections that we are striving against. But "The Lord looketh upon the heart," and not at the imperfect execution. If He sees the earnest endeavor to do His will, He will cover the deficiencies and imperfections with the merit of our Savior. If we make a mistake, we are to be glad to rectify it and to make proper apologies and reparation—assuring the brother that we did not mean to hurt his feelings. Or, if under temptation we felt less concern than we should about wounding him, we should ask pardon, confessing our sorrow, and then confess our fault at the Throne of Grace, asking forgiveness in Jesus' name.

If, then we hope to be of those who will be granted a place with Christ in His Throne, let us see to it that by His grace we attain the end of the commandment, the end of the Law, as given to the New Creation. Let it be "love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith"— a love which inspires to the willing, joyful sacrifice of every earthly hope and ambition, and which gladly lays down even life itself for the brethren, that we may be accounted worthy of the heavenly inheritance awaiting the "more than conquerors."—Rom. 8:37; Z. '15:263.

BY WAY OF THE CROSS

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." We are all to pass through the trying experiences represented by the **wine-press**. We are to lay down our lives in the Divine service. We are to submit ourselves to the crushing experiences, to be obliterated as humans, and to become New Creatures. "If we suffer (with Him), we shall also reign with Him,"—not otherwise. So we joyfully accept the invitation to drink of His cup. And not until the Cup has been drained to the last shall we receive the other Cup—the Cup of Kingdom joys. While our Lord had a great blessing in the obedience which He rendered to the Father, yet it was a trying time for Him down to the last moment, when He cried, "It is finished!" And so with the Church. We must drink **all** of the Cup. We must endure all of the experiences. None of the Cup is to be left.

All the sufferings of Christ will be complete when the Body of Christ shall have finished its course. The new Cup of Joy was given our Lord when He was received up into glory. Then all the angels of God worshipped Him. Soon our Cup of Joy will be given to us. Surely there was a joyous time when the sleeping saints were awakened and entered into their reward and received the Cup of Blessings! And one by one those who were alive and remained at the Coming of the Master are being gathered Home. Undoubtedly we shall all partake of this joy with them soon, if we are faithful. We believe the fulness of joy will not be reached until all the members of Christ are with Him beyond the veil. Then we shall share His Throne and partake of His glory. Then with our beloved Lord we shall drink of the new wine in the Kingdom: for the promise is to all His faithful saints.—Z. '15:71.

◆

A Christian might have a natural tendency to anger, and it might be impossible for him fully to control this tendency. Before he as a New Creature would be able to realize the situation, his natural tendency to lose his temper would involve him in trouble. The New Creature in such case should do everything possible to overcome this, through prayer and persistent effort, and if necessary, by imposing upon himself a penalty for every failure in this direction—some self-denial perhaps. But if the New Creature should say, Well, that is my flesh: I cannot help it, he might receive stripes, and an earth-born cloud might arise between him and the Lord: and that one would be spiritually sick until he should return to the Father and make proper amends and be reinstated.—Z. '14:117.

◆

An important lesson for all of the Lord's people to learn, is that the Lord himself has full charge and direction of the affairs of his Church: that he who blesses it with his holy spirit, and with the light of God is the same one who has permitted a restraining of the persecutions and siftings from without and from within. Those who learn this lesson thoroughly are the only ones who, amid all the affairs of life, can rest themselves fully in "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." Let us learn to trace divine providences in the past, and to appreciate them and to apply them as far as possible, to affairs of the present time; and then to trust the Lord even where we cannot trace him, knowing that all things shall work together for good to them that love him.—Z. '02:60.

◆

"Only a little while to walk with weary feet,
Only a little while the storms of life to meet,
Only a little while to tread the thorny way,
Only a little while, then comes the perfect Day.

"Only a little while, then let us do our best,
Only a little while, then comes the promised rest.
Only a little while, oh, what a word is this!
Only a little while, then comes the perfect bliss."
—Z. '15:283.

◆

If anyone of the Lord's people is escaping persecution, he should feel fearful of his condition and should make careful examination as to whether he is faithful to all the privileges and opportunities that he can find. This does not mean, however, that we should seek persecutions in the sense of doing foolish things or of doing proper things in a foolish manner. But it does mean that we should not shrink from the responsibility of proper conduct because of fear of consequences. Fear is one of the most subtle foes of the people of God. It should be offset by trust, by faith in God.—Z. '16:167.

◆

Mammon was the name of an ancient Syrian god—the god of riches, of cupidity, the impersonation of worldliness. Today mammon means, the spirit of the world, selfishness, with its avarice and love of wealth. Satan is the promoter of this mammon spirit. St. Paul tells us how we may know which master we are serving. He says, "His servants ye are to whom ye render obedience." (Romans 6:16.) If we are giving time and thought to grasping after riches and worldly honors, if our influence is for war and strife, for selfishness in any form, if our sympathies and affections are tending earthward rather than Heavenward, then we are serving mammon, the worldly spirit, and are thus serving Satan, whether we realize it or not. **Close and careful scrutiny of his thoughts, words and doings in the light of the Word of God will soon show any Christian, whether he is rendering service to his rightful Master or to the Adversary.** Whoever is serving the Devil is his servant, is in his army. If we are serving the cause of righteousness, and that only, we are on the Lord's side.—Z. '16:148.

◆

Mark well that it is not a case of unfaithful servants being **liable** to get into outer darkness, into error: it is a case of **must**. The Master's orders are peremptory and decisive: **"Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness."** The light now shining is **not for** the unfaithful, but for the faithful servants; and no matter how clearly the unfaithful may have seen and understood the deep things of God, and no matter how he may have enjoyed them, if he has not loved them so as to serve them and sacrifice his conveniences for them, he is unworthy of them and **must** go out into the outer darkness of the world in general. With these as with the world the disappointment of theories and plans in the great time of trouble will ere long bring the weeping and gnashing of teeth foretold.—Z. '06:5.

"From Glory Unto Glory"

2 Corinthians 3:18

"'From Glory unto Glory!' Be this our joyous song,
As on the narrow way to life we bravely march along!
'From Glory unto Glory!' O word of stirring cheer,
As dawns the solemn brightness of another glad New Year.

"Our own beloved Master 'hath many things to say.'
Look forward to His teaching, unfolding day by day;
To whispers of His Spirit, to insight clear and sweet,
To blessed consolation, while resting at His feet.

"'From Glory unto Glory!' Our faith hath seen the King!
We own His matchless beauty, as adoringly we sing;
But He hath more to show us! O thought of untold bliss!
And on we press exultingly in blessed hope to this.

"To marvelous outpourings of His 'treasures new and old,'
To largeness of His bounty, paid in the King's own gold,
To glorious expansion of His mysteries of grace,
To radiant unveilings of the brightness of His face.

"'From Glory unto Glory!' What great things He hath done,
What wonders He hath shown us, what triumphs He hath won!
We marvel at the records of the blessings of the year,
But sweeter than the Christmas bells rings out His promise clear—

"That 'greater things,' far greater, our longing eyes shall see!
We can but wait and wonder what 'greater things' shall be;
But glorious fulfilments rejoicingly we claim,
While pleading in the power of the All-Prevailing Name.

"'From Glory unto Glory!' What mighty blessings crown
The lives for which our Lord hath laid His own so freely down!
Omnipotence to keep us, Omniscience, too, to guide,
Jehovah's blessed Presence with us ever to abide!

"The fulness of His blessing encompasseth our way;
The fulness of His promise crowns every brightening day;
The fulness of His glory is beaming from Above,
While more and more we realize the fulness of His love.

"'From Glory unto Glory!' Without a shade of care,
Because the Lord who loves us will every burden bear;
Because we trust Him fully, and know that He will guide,
And know that He will keep us at His beloved side.

"'From Glory unto Glory!' Though tribulation fall,
It cannot touch our treasure, when Christ is All in All!
Whatever lies before us, there can be naught to fear,
For what are pain and sorrow when Jesus Christ is near!

"'From Glory unto Glory!' O marvels of the Word!
'With open face beholding the glory of the Lord.'
We, even we (O wondrous grace!) 'are changed into the same,'
The image of our Savior, to glorify His name.

"Abiding in His presence, and walking in the light,
And seeking to do always what is 'pleasing in His sight,'
We look to Him to keep us 'all glorious within,'
Because 'the blood of Jesus Christ is cleansing from all sin.'

"The things behind forgetting, we only gaze before,
'From Glory unto Glory,' that 'shineth more and more,'
Because our Lord hath said it, that such shall be our way,
(O splendor of the promise!) 'unto the perfect Day.'

"'From Glory unto Glory!' Our fellow-travellers still
Are travelling on the journey! The deep, electric thrill
Of quick, instinctive union, more frequent and more sweet,
Shall swiftly pass from heart to heart in true and tender beat.

"And closer yet, and closer, the golden bonds shall be,
Enlinking all who love our Lord in pure sincerity;
And wider yet, and wider, shall the circling glory glow,
As more and more we're taught of God that mighty Love to know.

"O ye who seek the Savior, look up, in faith and love;
Come up into the sunshine, so bright and warm above!
No longer tread the valley, but, clinging to His hand,
Ascend the shining summits and view the glorious land.

"In full and glad surrender we give ourselves to Thee,
Thine utterly, and only, and evermore to be!
O Son of God, who lovest us, we will be Thine alone,
And all we are, and all we have, shall henceforth be Thine own!

"Now onward, ever onward, 'from strength to strength' we go,
While 'grace for grace' abundantly shall from His fulness flow;
To glory's full fruition, from glory's foretaste here,
Until His very Presence crown our happiest New Year!"

—Z. '17:13.

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